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HORATIO LORD WALPOLE.

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MEMOIRS

OF

HORATIO, LORD WALPOLE,

SELECTED FROM HIS

CORRESPONDENCE AND PAPERS,

AND CONNECTED WITH

THE HISTORY OF THE TIMES,

FROM 1678 TO 1757.

By WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.A.S.

RECTOR OF BEMERTON.

Third Edition,

CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

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VOL. I.

LONDON:

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1820.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HORATIO,

EARL OF ORFORD,

AND

BARON WALPOLE, of WALPOLE & WOLTERTON.

MY LORD,

THESE Memoirs of your illustrious Father, being principally drawn from his Papers and Correspondence, which your Lordship communicated to me without the smallest controul, I feel the highest satisfaction in presenting them to the Public under the sanction of your Lordship's

name, both as a proof of their authenticity, and as a testimony of gratitude for many acts of kindness and confidence.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your much obliged, and

Obedient, humble Servant,

WILLIAM COXE.

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TO THE SECOND EDITION.

I cannot put forth this second edition without expressing my gratitude for the patronage which this work has experienced from the public; and I have endeavoured to render it more deserving of their attention by a few interesting additions, which a recent visit to Wolterton enabled me to collect, and others derived from the communications of my noble friend Lord Braybrook. I have the satisfaction to add, that I have discovered no occasion to make any material alteration in historical facts, or deductions, or to correct any error, except a few typographical inadvertencies.

Bemerton,
June 1. 1808.

PREFACE.

HAVING obtained access to the papers and Correspondence of Horatio, Lord Walpole, which are preserved at Wolterton, I found them so interesting and important, that I purposed to print a Selection, preceded by a brief Narrative of his Life. I accordingly commenced the impression; but was induced to postpone the publication, for reasons which are given in the Preface to the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole. In that work, however, I inserted numerous letters of Lord Walpole, and drew materials from those documents among his papers which tended to elucidate his brother's administration.

From an early period of his life, Lord Walpole was engaged in a public capacity. In 1706, he accompanied General Stanhope to Barcelona as Private Secretary, and was employed in various missions of consequence. In 1707, he was appointed Secretary to Mr. Boyle, first as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards as Secretary of State; and, in 1709, accompanied the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Townshend, who were Plenipotentiaries at the Congress of

Gertruydenberg. Soon after the accession of George the First, he was successively Under Secretary of State, Secretary to the Treasury, and Envoy at the Hague, until the schism of the Whig Ministry, which terminated in the resignation of Lord Townshend and his brother, as well as his own.

In 1720 he became Secretary to the Duke of Grafton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; was reappointed Secretary to the Treasury, and again deputed to the Hague.

In 1723 he commenced his Embassy to Paris; and continued to fill that important station until 1730. In 1733 he was nominated Embassador to the States General, and remained at the Hague until 1739, when he returned to England.

During the whole period of Sir Robert Walpole's administration, Lord Walpole was an able and useful coadjutor to his brother, both in and out of parliament; and was consulted in all business of State, particularly foreign transactions. During his residence abroad, besides official dispatches, he maintained a private intercourse of letters with his brother, and even a confidential correspondence with Queen Caroline, who reposed the fullest reliance on his talents and integrity.

Although, from the time of his brother's resignation, he filled no official station; yet in consequence of his abilities, experience, and weight among his party, he retained a considerable influence over many of the Ministers; he was confidentially consulted by Mr. Pelham and Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, and often gave his opinion in the most frank and unreserved manner to the Duke of Newcastle, to the Duke of Cumberland, and even to the King.

The importance of his Correspondence and Papers will fully appear from this Sketch of his Life; and it would be difficult to point out another character, who, for so long a period, was more trusted with the secrets of government, more acquainted with the motives and springs of action, and possessed more influence in the direction of foreign and domestic affairs.

I should have derived extreme satisfaction from the accomplishment of my original design; but as the Selection could not be comprised in less than three quarto volumes, I could not venture to engage in so extensive a publication, consisting principally of State-papers, which I had no reason to believe, would have a sale sufficient to repay the necessary expences. I therefore altered my plan; and now submit to the public, Memoirs of Lord Walpole, inter-

spersed with extracts from his Papers and Correspondence, and connected with the History of the Times.

These important documents fill one hundred and sixty large volumes or port-folios. They comprise,

I. Mr. Walpole's correspondence with George the Second, Queen Caroline, and the other branches of the Royal Family, at different periods of his life.

II. His official and private correspondence with Sir Robert Walpole, the Secretaries of State and Foreign Ministers, from the commencement of his political career, to the resignation of his brother.

III. Letters of the most private and interesting nature, which passed between Mr. Walpole, the Duke of Newcastle, Mr. Pelham, Mr. Trevor, Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, the Hon. Philip Yorke, late Earl of Hardwicke, and others, from the period of Sir Robert Walpole's resignation to his own death.

IV. A numerous collection of Deductions, Memorials, Projects, and Observations, on a variety of political subjects; together with the draughts of several speeches in parliament.

V. Mr. Walpole's Apology. This authentic document, written by himself towards the latter end of his life, and still preserved in his own

hand-writing, contains a candid and lively narrative of his transactions from 1715 to 1739.

Among these articles I have principally availed myself,

1. Of his Apology, the greater part of which is printed in these Memoirs.

2. Of his extensive Correspondence during his Embassy at Paris.

3. Of that part of his Correspondence, with Queen Caroline, and the other branches of the Royal Family, which was not printed in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, particularly his interesting letters to the Duke of Cumberland in 1746 and 1747.

4. His Miscellaneous Correspondence, from 1742 to 1757.

5. Thoughts on the utility of an Alliance with Prussia, occasioned by the approaching death of the King, 1740. — Project of a Grand Alliance, founded upon a good understanding between his Majesty and the King of Prussia, Oct. 5. 1740. — Rhapsody of Foreign Politics, occasioned by the conclusion of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, and of that with Spain in 1750; and other documents, which are cited in the course of the narrative.

6. The substance of a speech on the question for continuing the Hanover troops in the pay of Great Britain, 1743. — Substance of a speech in

the Committee of Supply, on the demand of the Empress Queen for £100,000, 1749. — Mr. Walpole's Speech in a committee of the whole House, upon a motion that a sum not exceeding £32,000 be granted to his Majesty, to make good his engagements with the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony, by treaty, 1752.

In addition to these sources of information, I have had recourse to the various other documents enumerated in the Preface to the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, particularly the Orford, Waldegrave, Grantham, Harrington, Melcombe and Keene Papers.

The Hardwicke Papers supplied me with a series of confidential letters between the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Walpole, Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, and his son the Hon. Philip Yorke, late earl of Hardwicke. I have also derived considerable information from a Parliamentary Journal written by the late Earl, which contains an account of the Debates during the session of 1744 and 1745; and details many interesting particulars concerning the dismission of Lord Granville and the formation of the Broad-bottom Ministry.

I have availed myself of the Correspondence between Lord Walpole and Mr. Etough, in the Etough Papers; and particularly of a narrative drawn up by Mr. Etough, entitled, "Minutes

of Memorable Conversations with the late Lord Walpole, Baron of Wolterton, with Remarks on his character and conduct."

I am besides considerably indebted to Lord Viscount Hampden, for access to the Papers of his Noble Father, who was the confidential Friend of Lord Walpole, Secretary to the Embassy, and afterwards Envoy and Plenipotentiary at the Hague. This collection contains numerous letters from Lord Walpole, which form an interesting addition to the Narrative.

From the Papers of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, preserved at Pont-y-pool Park, communicated by the kindness of Capel Hanbury Leigh, Esquire, I derived many curious anecdotes; and have been enabled to give to the Public some interesting letters of Mr. Fox, afterwards Lord Holland.

The principal documents from which I have compiled these Memoirs, being in manuscript, I have had little occasion to draw my materials from printed narratives; but I have not omitted to cite those authors on whose testimony I have advanced any material fact.

During the æra of the Walpole administration, I have avoided, as much as possible, a repetition of the same events and reflections which occur in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole; but have principally confined myself to

those foreign transactions and domestic incidents, which did not fall within the plan of that work, or tended to illustrate the conduct and character of Lord Walpole.

From the resignation of Sir Robert Walpole I have expatiated more largely on the History of the Times. I have attempted to develope the characters and administrations of Lord Granville, Mr. Pelham, and the Duke of Newcastle; to sketch the state of parties, particularly the contests for power between Lord Granville and the Pelhams, and between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox; and to form a connected narrative of political transactions, from 1742, to the death of Lord Walpole in 1757. With this view, besides the Correspondence of Lord Walpole, I have introduced various letters from the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, Mr. Pelham, and Mr. Fox.

I therefore hope that this Work, which may be considered as a companion and supplement to the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, will not only place the talents, character, and services of Lord Walpole in a new point of view, but will throw additional light on a period of English History, of which we have few authentic documents.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

THIRD EDITION.

THESE Memoirs being out of print, and a third Edition demanded, the reader is respectfully informed, that as the Plates are worn out, the portraits given with the former Editions are necessarily omitted, except that of Lord Walpole, which has been re-engraved.

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MEMOIRS

OF

LORD WALPOLE.

CHAPTER 1.

1678—1714.

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HORATIO, the subject of the present memoirs, brother of Sir Robert Walpole, was born at Houghton, in Norfolk, on the 8th of December 1678.

His grandfather, Sir Edward Walpole, received the Order of the Bath as a recompense for his zeal in promoting the cause of the Restoration; and was distinguished for his eloquence in parliament, where he sat as member for Lynn Regis until his death, which happened

in 1667. He married Susan, second daughter and co-heiress of Sir Robert Crane, bart. of Chilton, in the county of Sussex.

Robert Walpole, was eldest son and heir of Sir Edward, and resided at Houghton in Norfolk, which had long been the family seat. He was an active country gentleman, and zealous partisan of the Revolution, and promoted the cause of the Whigs as member of parliament for the borough of Castle Rising, in the county of Norfolk. He possessed considerable landed property, which he improved by his attention to agriculture, and, notwithstanding the largeness of his family, left an estate between 2000*l.* and 3000*l.* a year to his eldest son. He was a man of high honour and integrity. From motives of extreme delicacy, he invariably refused his consent to the marriage of his daughter Dorothy with Charles lord viscount Townshend, to whom he was left guardian by his friend Horatio, first viscount Townshend*, lest he should be sus-

* Horatio, first viscount Townshend, descended from an ancient family in Norfolk, who trace their lineage beyond the Conquest, was eldest surviving son of Sir Roger Townshend, who was created a baronet in 1617, and built the mansion-house of Rainham. He represented the county of Norfolk in parliament, and died in 1636. Horatio Townshend was born in 1530, and during the civil wars greatly distinguished himself by his prudent and spirited conduct. In the times of confusion which succeeded the death of Cromwell, he was among the

pected of forming a match so advantageous to his family by improper means. He was much devoted to a country life, extremely hospitable, and of a convivial temper. By his wife, Mary, only daughter and heiress of Sir Jeffery Burwel, of Rougham, in Suffolk, he had nineteen children, of whom only six survived. He died in 1700, aged 50, and was interred in the parish-church of Houghton.

Horatio, or, as he is more generally called, Horace, his second surviving son, was educated on the foundation at Eton school, and in 1698, admitted a scholar of King's College in the university of Cambridge †. Both at Eton and at College he prosecuted his studies with unwearied diligence, and gave early proofs of that indefatigable application which distinguished him through life. He acquired a high degree of classical knowledge, and displayed, both in his early and later years, many specimens of his taste in Latin composition.

Descended from a family distinguished by their attachment to the Whigs, he adopted the

the foremost who contributed to the restoration of monarchy, and, for his essential services, was created baron Townshend of Lynn Regis, and lord lieutenant of the county of Norfolk.

In 1682 he was advanced to the title of viscount Townshend of Rainham, and died in 1687, leaving his eldest son Charles heir to his title and estate, in the fourteenth year of his age.

† Register of Eton College.

principles of that party; and as the provost and most of the fellows were Tories, he employed his wit, of which he possessed a great share, in throwing ridicule on the Tories and Jacobites, and, as he always frankly avowed his sentiments, was marked out as a formidable partisan of the Whig principles.

In a letter to his brother, dated May 9th, he expressed his regret at the death of king William, and his enthusiasm for the character of that great monarch. It being the custom in the universities to write copies of verses, either of condolence or congratulation on the death or accession of the sovereign, a selection is always made of such as are esteemed most worthy of publication. Those composed by Mr. Walpole obtained a place in this selection *, and, in allusion to them, he makes the following observations: "I sent you yesterday the verses, and I hope you will pardon the meanness of a certain person's, whose, I'll be bold to say, would have been the first in the book, could his ingenuity have equalled the deserts of that great man, or his poetry the inclination of, in this case, as in all other things, yours most affectionately."

In May 1702 he was chosen fellow of King's

* Luctus Cantabrigienses:
At non præcipitis fati ludibria flemus, &c.

College *, and, being at liberty to retire from the university purposed following the profession of the Law. But as his fortune was only 150*l.* and he had numerous acquaintance among persons of the first rank, he opened his mind to his brother; expressed his regret at quitting the university, where he had reaped so much pleasure and profit, and his anxiety at launching into a scene of life incompatible with his income.

"King's, Nov. 24, 1702.

"Dearest Brother,

"When I begin to consider, (and I think it is high time now,) where I am, and what I am about, I find myselfe very easie in a college life; in the constant enjoyment of the best company, both within and without doors, whether I converse with the living or the dead, I can't forbear thinking this is the best part of my life, while my diligence and study on one side bear proportion with my pleasure and diversion on the other. But when I look a little forwards, and one would think with a great deal of joy and satisfaction too, to have the noble prospect of London and the Law, those two spacious fields of pleasure and of profit, I can't forbear being somewhat uneasy to think how willing I am to step forwards, and how unable my legs are to

* Register of King's College.

carry me. Were my outward circumstances proportionable to my inward; or would my fortune and pocket, requisite to live at London, answer my earnest inclination of sticking to the Law, I should think no body happier than myself, while I have so many so nigh related to me, as well by kindness as by blood, among the chiefest of whom gratitude and thanks oblige me to rank yourself, both for your past as well as your present promises of your future love and affection."

In this state of uncertainty he was induced to entertain thoughts of going into the Army. During his continuance at college he had formed an intimate acquaintance with the marquis of Blandford, only son of John duke of Marlborough, who was admitted as a nobleman of King's College, to complete his education. The young marquis conceived a high esteem for Mr. Walpole, and engaged his acceptance of a commission in a regiment to which he soon expected to be appointed. But his hopes of military promotion were frustrated by the premature death of the marquis, who died of the small-pox on the 20th of February 1703, and was buried in King's College chapel. "Mr. Walpole," according to the expressions of Etough, "deplored this sad event, not only as the greatest loss to himself, but to the public. His qualities were

represented as singularly excellent and amiable *."

On this disappointment he entertained hopes of procuring, through the recommendation of his brother, an office in the exchequer, from lord Halifax, who was auditor; or a small place at court, through the interest of his uncle Horatio, who married lady Anne Osborne, daughter of Thomas duke of Leeds, and widow of Thomas Coke, esq. of Holkham in Norfolk. In conformity, however, with his first resolution, he took chambers at Lincoln's Inn, and commenced the study of the Law; but in 1705 relinquished the profession, on being appointed secretary to brigadier-general Stanhope, envoy and plenipotentiary to the archduke Charles, son of the emperor Leopold, and acknowledged king of Spain by the allied powers.

General Stanhope had acquired great reputation at the capture of Barcelona in 1704, which surrendered to the allied forces under the command of the eccentric and gallant earl of Peterborough. Charles was joyfully proclaimed king by the inhabitants of Barcelona, and this conquest was followed by the reduction of all Catalonia. Mr. Stanhope repaired to England with an account of this transaction, and returned in

* Etough's Minutes of Memorable Conversations with Lord Walpole.

1705, as envoy and plenipotentiary, with a large force for the relief of Barcelona, which was, in the interim, besieged by Philip the Fifth in person, and reduced to the greatest extremity.

Mr. Walpole sailed from Plymouth, in his new capacity, in March 1706. After touching at Lisbon and Gibraltar, and receiving great additional force by the accession of the Dutch, and by the junction of Sir George Byng, and Sir John Jennings, the fleet appeared off Barcelona at a critical moment. The town had been besieged thirty-five days, by the united forces of France and Spain under the command of Noailles, and encouraged by the presence of Philip; the fort of Montjoy was captured, the approaches pushed to the covert way, and two breaches made in the walls. The harbour was likewise blockaded by the French fleet, and Charles expected every moment to fall into the hands of the enemy. In this perilous situation, though earnestly advised by his friends to escape, he refused to quit his capital; he exposed himself to the greatest danger, worked with his family in forming an entrenchment behind the breach, and, by his example, animated the besieged to make an almost unparalleled resistance.

Notwithstanding these united exertions, a general assault was hourly expected, when the combined squadron arrived. The troops were

instantly landed, and passed great part of the night under arms behind the breach. On the 11th, the whole French army retreated with precipitation, leaving their sick and wounded, great part of their artillery, and immense magazines and stores.

Mr. Walpole concludes his account of this fortunate event by saying, "Their march was overcast this morning with the darkest eclipse of the sun as almost ever was seen; by which the superstitious here portend the eternal setting of the Bourbon sun."

He also highly praises the prudent and manly conduct of the archduke Charles; but gives a curious instance of Austrian superstition and phlegm. "This slow court" he says "has at last determined to set out for Valentia, having spent a great deal of time in unnecessary ceremonies, with thanks to the Holy Virgin and St. Antonio; and now they must not omit, though much out of their way, the solemnity of going to Montseratt. The king sets out this afternoon, which being two days later than he had fixt for his departure, excused himself to Mr. Stanhope, (who has always been pressing him to lose no time), and said he stay'd for his equipage. My master told him, the prince of Orange entered London in a coach and four, with a cloak-bag

behind it, and was made king not many weeks after *."

Mr. Walpole discharged the office of secretary to general Stanhope with diligence and fidelity; and was employed in several delicate commissions, which he executed with great address. Being dispatched to England, in a frigate of 20 guns, he passed near the English squadron, under the command of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, which blockaded the harbour of Toulon, then besieged by the united forces of the emperor and the duke of Savoy. He paid a visit to the admiral the day after he had entertained prince Eugene and the duke of Savoy, and received several anecdotes of their behaviour and conferences. Among others, he used to relate an observation of Sir Cloudesley Shovel; "The duke of Savoy is heartily and sincerely for the success of the undertaking, but the disposition of the prince is the reverse; and, Horace, Toulon will not be taken:" the event justified his assertions †.

About this period Mr. Walpole was appointed one of the exempts in the guards by his friend lord Townshend, captain of the yeomen, and did not long continue in Spain; for in 1707 we find

* May 16, and June 23, 1706. Walpole Papers.

† For an account of this unfortunate expedition and the causes of its failure, see my History of the House of Austria, vol. 1. pt. 2. p. 1192.

him private secretary to Mr. Boyle*, (with whom he had formed an intimate acquaintance at Cambridge), first as chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards as secretary of State. Though a man of sound sense, and not deficient in parliamentary abilities, Mr. Boyle was of a convivial and indolent disposition; hence the assistance of Mr. Walpole was peculiarly acceptable, from his indefatigable application and facility in transacting business.

Mr. Walpole continued in this situation until the beginning of 1709, when he became secretary to lord Townshend, who was appointed joint plenipotentiary with the duke of Marlborough to the congress at Gertruydenberg. His indefatigable attention, sound judgment, and cheerful disposition, endeared him to these two noble persons; and the few letters in this collection, which still remain, prove the high estimation and confidence with which they treated their private secretary. In one of his letters, dated Hague, Nov. 29, 1709, lord Townshend thus addresses him with the affection of a friend:

"I am very much obliged to you for the favour of yours, which brought the good news

* Afterwards lord Carleton. He was grandson of Richard earl of Burlington, and third son of Charles viscount Dungarvon in Ireland. See Collins's and Lodge's Peerage.

of your safe arrival in London. You will easily believe I am under a great deal of concern, upon account of the difficulties the treaty for the barrier has met with in England, which has not a little increased the fits of spleen for which you have so often laughed at me. As to our evenings, you will easily believe we are in a very melancholy way of passing them at present; and you can make no reparation for leaving us, unless it be by returning as soon as you can get leave."

Mr. Walpole did not remain long in England, but rejoined lord Townshend at the Hague, and continued with him until his return. During this period he bore a share in the confidential correspondence between his brother, the duke of Marlborough, and lord Townshend, relating to the intrigues which preceded the change of administration; and some of his letters, on this occasion, are published in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole.

On the removal of lord Sunderland, he warmly opposed all compromise with Harley and the Tories, and supported the necessity of a fair and unanimous conduct on the side of the Whigs. From the resignation of lord Townshend, which appeared in the Gazette of March 17, 1711, to the accession of George the First, Mr. Walpole, who remained firm to his party, had no public

office, but promoted, as far as his situation and abilities permitted, the succession of the Protestant line.*

His name, in conjunction with lord Pelham, afterwards duke of Newcastle, Addison, Pulteney, Methuen, Craggs, and many others remarkable for their attachment to the principles of the Revolution, is found among the members of the Hanover club. Oldmixon, the factious partisan of the Whigs, records an instance of the zeal with which the club testified their abhorrence of the Stuart line: "The loyal Hanover club took the occasion of the queen's birth-day, February 6th, 1713, to signalize their zeal and affection to the Protestant succession, by causing the effigies of the devil, the pope, and the pretender, to be carried, in solemn procession, from Charing Cross to the Royal Exchange, and so back to Charing Cross, where they were burnt †."

In 1713 he obtained a seat in the new parliament, and seconded his brother in favour of the French refugees, and against the expulsion of Steele. He also opposed the treaty of Utrecht, and in his Rhapsody of Foreign Politics, probably the last essay which he ever committed

* See Correspondence to the Memoirs of Sir R. Walpole, vol. ii, p. 26, 30, 32.

† Oldmixon's History of England, p. 536.

to writing, at an advanced period of his life, he strongly and justly condemns the principles of that treaty:

"After a series of wonderful successes for ten years, obtained by us, jointly with our allies, against the common enemy, we made an unequal and very disadvantageous treaty of commerce with France. Our ancient privileges of trade to Old Spain were explained away by a treaty of commerce with that crown; by our separate treaties of peace, we sacrificed and abandoned, in violation of all good faith, the interest of our allies; and particularly, our solemn engagements with the king of Portugal, (who had exposed himself to the vengeance of France and Spain, by deserting them to come into the grand alliance, and who, at the same time, had made a treaty with us, very beneficial to the trade of this country), were broken, to oblige Spain; the security of the Netherlands, and of this nation, as well as the settlement of the Hanover succession, which, in consequence, was afterwards attempted to be subverted, was left upon a very loose and precarious foot, by a new treaty of barrier and succession*."

* At the present time when this important treaty is no longer a subject of mere party dispute, every lover of his country who has duly reflected on the history of the preceding wars and negotiations from the peace of Westphalia, cannot but subscribe to the truth of these observations by so enlightened a

politician as Mr. Walpole. In fact, this fatal engagement and its consequence, the Barrier Treaty, shackled the operations of the Walpole administration in particular, and has since produced the most fatal effects to England and to Europe. See History of the House of Austria from the peace of Westphalia to the Barrier Treaty.

CHAPTER 2.

1714—1722.

Zeal of Mr. Walpole in Support of the House of Brunswick — Appointed successively Under Secretary of State, and Secretary to the Treasury — First and Second Mission to the Hague — Account of the Government of the United Provinces — Mr. Walpole's Journey to Hanover — Change of Ministry, and Resignation of Mr. Walpole — His Conduct in Opposition — Again comes into office — Third Mission to the Hague.

ON the accession of George the first, Mr. Walpole signalised his zeal for the house of Brunswick, by moving for the payment of the arrears due to the Hanover troops, and for the reward of 100,000*l.* to any person who should apprehend the pretender, should he attempt to land in any part of the king's dominions.

He now obtained the reward of his attachment to the Whigs, and was nominated under secretary of state by Charles lord viscount Townshend, to whom the arrangement of the new administration was principally committed, and whose friendship for Mr. Walpole had been strengthened by his marriage with Dorothy Walpole, whom he had recently espoused after the death of his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter

of Lord Pelham. On the appointment of his brother to the place of first lord of the Treasury and chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1715, Mr. Walpole was nominated under secretary to the Treasury.

In 1715, the kingdom being menaced with an invasion in favour of the pretender, Mr. Walpole was deputed to the Hague to concur with general Cadogan, the British envoy and plenipotentiary, in an application to the States General for the immediate succour of 6000 men. He was selected for this delicate trust in consequence of his conciliating disposition and intimacy with the leading men of the republic, which he had acquired during frequent missions to the Hague; and his conduct did not belie the expectations of his friends.

General Cadogan being at Antwerp, Mr. Walpole, on his arrival at the Hague, instantly presented a memorial to the States General, and prevailed on them to grant the succours required, without referring to their respective provinces, according to the usual forms of the government; by which means the troops were ordered before the French embassador was acquainted with the demand.

His success in this important negotiation occasioned his second mission to the Hague in 1716, as joint plenipotentiary with general Ca-

dogan, for the purpose of obtaining the junction of a Dutch squadron to protect the Baltic trade against the depredations of the Swedes. Though this measure was opposed by some of the states as a Hanoverian project for the security of Bremen and Verden, the address and influence of Mr. Walpole triumphed over all opposition.

He was no less successful in obtaining the accession of the States General to a defensive treaty with Great Britain and the Emperor. In effecting this alliance he counteracted the intrigues, overbore the arguments of Chateauneuf the French embassador, and roused the supine and temporising spirit of the Dutch. But he succeeded in the still more difficult task of extorting their consent to the triple alliance with England and France, for securing, by reciprocal guaranties, the establishment of the Protestant succession in England; of the reversion of the crowns of France and Spain, as settled by the treaty of Utrecht, and the demolition of the port of Mardyke. The rapid conclusion of this treaty, in spite of the supineness and prejudices of the Dutch, and the delays of their complicated form of government, was a master-piece of policy and address.

Although general Cadogan was joined in full powers to negotiate this treaty, and although

Mr. Walpole, from motives of delicacy, declined the signature; yet he was principally instrumental in bringing it to a conclusion. Cadogan was well skilled in military affairs, but in negotiations acted more like a general than a minister. He was impetuous, and impatient of opposition, lavish in his promises to remove a present difficulty, "and thought," as Mr. Walpole expresses himself, "that the pen and the sword were to be wielded with the same fierceness." In allusion to his impetuosity, pensionary Heinsius used to say emphatically, that Cadogan was an excellent general of an army; meaning that he was an indifferent negotiator; and he paid a due compliment to the conciliating temper of Mr. Walpole, by adding, "that unless he had been employed, the negotiation would never have succeeded." Even George the First, who was dry, and sparing of compliments, laconically observed to him, "Vous avez beaucoup d'amis en Hollande, et vous m'avez rendu bien des services *."

His valuable services in these, as well as in the complicated negotiations which followed, will be best appreciated by tracing a sketch of the government and situation of the Dutch at this period.

Of all the constitutions formed by statesmen,

* Mr. Walpole's Apology.

or described by historians, none was more complicated and embarrassed than that of the seven united provinces.* In fact, and strictly speaking, the seven provinces did not form one republic, but rather seven confederate republics; nor did each province form one commonwealth, but rather a confederacy of such orders, cities and towns, as enjoyed the right of sending deputies to the provincial states. And even these provincial states were only the representatives of the sovereign power, which ultimately resided in the municipal corporations of the towns, and in the orders of nobles and clergy, who conjointly nominated those representatives.

For the bond and union of the confederacy the provincial states elected a certain † number of deputies, who formed the supreme assembly called the States General, from which all military men were excluded. But although the States General represented the sovereign power, were dignified with the title of High Mightinesses, and transacted the principal business of the republic; yet they did not, like the parliament of Great Britain, or the diet of Sweden, possess the

* 1. Guelderland and Zutphen. 2. Holland. 3. Zealand. 4. Utrecht. 5. Friesland. 6. Overyssel. 7. Groningen and Ommelanden.

† The number was unlimited, yet each province had only a single vote.

supreme authority. They could not enact laws, declare war, make peace, impose taxes, form alliances, and raise troops, without the consent of the respective provinces, to which they referred all objects of importance.

This assembly was a permanent body, resident at the Hague, and met every day, except Saturday and Sunday. Each province presided in turn during a week, and the first in rank among the deputies of the province enjoyed that honour. The president received all letters and memorials from the embassadors of the republic, and from foreign embassadors resident at the Hague; caused them to be read by the greffier, proposed the subjects of deliberation, and collected and declared the suffrages.

The greffier, or secretary, was the chief minister of the States General; he, or his deputy, was always present, and sat, like the clerk of the house of commons, at the table during the debates; he drew up and recorded the resolutions, composed and dispatched instructions to the ministers abroad, and the letters to foreign powers. He was present at the conferences with foreign ministers, and on that occasion had a vote. M. Fagel filled this high office at this period, a man of mild temper, conciliating manners, sound sense, great application, and warmly attached to the union with England.

The grand pensionary of Holland was the most important office nominated by the provincial states. He was one of the municipal members, and represented Holland in the States General; he was always present at their deliberations, and proposed all things which related to that province; he was commissioned to watch over the constitutional laws of the confederacy, and directed the meeting of the counsellors deputies with only a deliberative voice. In the provincial assembly of the States of Holland he proposed, collected the votes, registered the resolutions, and maintained a correspondence with foreign ministers. He had a considerable influence in the republic of the united provinces, from the preponderance which Holland enjoyed in the general affairs. The celebrated Heinsius, whose character is too well known to require an eulogium, was pensionary at this time.

Holland, which paid more than half of the public burdens, had the greatest influence in the States General; and the city of Amsterdam, which paid one third of the taxes of Holland, had no less influence over that province.

Few words are wanting to describe the natural imbecility of so complex a government, weak in its efforts, uncertain in its direction, and dilatory in its proceedings; neither fit for war, nor capable of maintaining itself in peace. The

defects of this "many-headed headless government," as it is justly styled by Mr. Walpole, "containing as many masters as minds," could only be duly modified and corrected by the office of Stadtholder, or captain and admiral-general of the union, vested with considerable prerogatives, which, since the revolution that gave rise to the republic, had been uniformly conferred on the princes of the house of Orange. At that period five of the seven provinces, namely Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Guelderland and Overyssel, elected William the first prince of Orange; and the two remaining provinces of Friesland and Groningen chose his cousin John, count of Nassau Dillenburgh. The stadtholdership of the five provinces was continued in the descendants of William, namely, Maurice, Henry Frederick, and William the Second. On his death, in 1650, it was abolished by the republican party; but, on the invasion of Holland by Louis the XIVth, was restored to his son William, prince of Orange, afterwards king of England, and declared hereditary in his male line. William dying without issue, the office was again abolished; but his cousin and heir John William Frederick, count of Nassau Dietz, became prince of Orange, and was stadtholder of Friesland by hereditary descent, and of Groningen by election. Being drowned in crossing the Mardyke,

July 14, 1711, the stadtholdership of Groningen was abolished, and his posthumous son, William, then a minor, who succeeded to his dignities and estates, was only hereditary stadtholder of Friesland. During his minority the Orange party was directed by his mother Maria Louisa, daughter of Charles, landgrave of Hesse Cassel.

During the course of the negotiation for the conclusion of the triple alliance, Mr. Walpole gave the most solemn assurances to the states, that no treaty should be concluded with France without their participation. But the impatience of the king to secure the guaranty of France, ill according with the dilatoriness of the Dutch government, a separate treaty was arranged between the abbé du Bois and secretary Stanhope at Hanover, and full powers were forwarded to general Cadogan and Mr. Walpole to sign it in conjunction with du Bois. Mr. Walpole declining to sign a treaty in contradiction to his solemn asseverations, requested instant permission to return to England, and, in a letter to secretary Stanhope, expressed the agony under which he laboured. "Having plighted to the states my faith, my honour, and my conscience, in his majesty's name, that nothing of this nature should be done, if I should afterwards sign with the abbé, in violation of these sacred and solemn assurances, which I repeated but last Tuesday in

a conference, I should never be able to shew my ignominious head here again. And therefore I plainly see that this business, in which I thought I should have some share of credit, will end in my ruin; because, although I shall ever think it the last misfortune to disobey so good and gracious a sovereign; yet I must freely confess I had rather starve, nay die, than do a thing that gives such a terrible wound to my honour and conscience, and will make me for ever incapable of serving the king any more, especially in this place, where I have at present some little credit and interest*."

He made as strong remonstrances to Lord Townshend and his brother; and, after much difficulty, obtained the king's permission to return to England, and commit the signature of the treaty to general Cadogan.

On his arrival in London, Mr. Walpole found the ministry, who, under the prince of Wales, directed the administration of affairs during the absence of the king, in a state of extreme embarrassment. Letters from the king, secretary Stanhope, and lord Sunderland, had been just received from Hanover, reproaching the ministry in general for their opposition to the king's continental politics, accusing lord Townshend

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, Correspondence, Vol. II. p. 107, 4to.

with protracting the signature of the triple alliance, and Walpole of declining to replace the money advanced for paying the troops of Munster and Saxe Gotha. Lord Sunderland had also fomented the king's jealousy of the prince of Wales, and persuaded him that the ministers in England were caballing with the son against the authority of the father. With a view to corroborate his assertions, he persuaded the king to declare his inclination to continue at Hanover, provided means could be found to transact the business in parliament during his absence. The brother ministers, anxious to conciliate the king, fell into the snare. In consequence of a resolution of the lords of the council, lord Townshend transmitted to secretary Stanhope the heads of the business to be laid before parliament, and concluded his letter with stating it as their humble opinion, "that in conducting so many important affairs, through the difficulties incident to all popular assemblies, and more particularly increased by the unhappy divisions under which the nation laboured, it would be impossible for them to succeed, or even to carry on the session, without frequent and long interruptions, unless his majesty thought proper to trust his royal highness with discretionary powers, to which they might have recourse for extricating the service out of unforeseen difficulties, and for

accommodating their conduct, from time to time, to the several variations of circumstances that might arise, which could hardly be communicated, much less be provided for, at a distance." "It being thought necessary," he added, "to pitch upon somebody to carry this dispatch, who might be able to explain any of the points contained in it, his royal highness has been pleased to appoint Mr. Horace Walpole, who was therefore present at the meeting of the lords, that he might, by hearing what passed, be enabled to give his majesty the most exact information of the sentiments of his servants on the present state of affairs *."

Mr. Walpole was instantly dispatched with this letter, and was at the same time privately instructed by lord Townshend and his brother to ascertain the situation of affairs at Hanover, to justify their conduct, and to expostulate with Mr. Stanhope for entering into the cabals of their enemies. Charged with this commission, Mr. Walpole quitted London on the 13th of November, arrived on the 17th at the Hague, had a short conference with pensionary Heinsius, and the same night departed for Hanover.

After travelling night and day, he reached

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, Correspondence, Vol. II. p. 123.

Gohre* on the 22d, but learned, with extreme mortification, that orders had been transmitted to England to prorogue the parliament; and that from the king's jealousy of the prince, all public proceedings were to be suspended until his majesty's arrival. He soon discovered the successful intrigues of Sunderland with the Hanoverian junto, and their effect on the king, and found that Stanhope, in whom his brother and lord Townshend had reposed implicit confidence, was deeply implicated in the cabal.

The presence of Mr. Walpole confounded lord Sunderland, and disconcerted the Hanoverian junto. Mr. Stanhope, affected with his warm expostulations and manly remonstrances, renewed his professions of gratitude and attachment to those who had raised him to his high situation. He declared, with the most solemn asseverations, that he would use his influence with the king in support of his friends in England, and requested the intervention of Mr. Walpole to re-establish the former harmony. The king also expressed his regret at the recent misunderstanding, and testified the strongest marks of restored confidence.

Mr. Walpole accordingly quitted Gohre, with the full conviction of Mr. Stanhope's repentance

* A favourite hunting seat of George the First, near the banks of the Elbe.

and sincerity, and hastened to carry the good tidings to England. His eagerness to convey this pleasing intelligence will appear from his letter to Mr. Stanhope, on his arrival at the Hague, dated December 8. "I arrived here last night in a very indifferent condition; for my chaise breaking, two posts from Hanover, I got into a light open waggon, and by that means was exposed to such violent storms of wind, hail, and rain, that after the first night I contracted extreme pains in all my joints on my left side, so that it was impossible for me to ride on horseback. However, without taking any rest, I continued my journey hither, that I may lose no time in my way to England, in order to execute a commission that I think of the utmost consequence to the public affairs, and which my own particular concern, as well as his majesty's service, will engage me to use my utmost skill to bring to a good issue *."

He had scarcely reached London, and communicated to the brother ministers the renewal of the king's favour, when a dispatch from secretary Stanhope arrived, announcing the dismission of lord Townshend from the office of secretary of state, accompanied with the offer of the go-

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, Correspondence, Vol. II. p. 137.

vernment of Ireland*. Confounded at this instance of duplicity, and shocked at being the dupe of Stanhope's affected sincerity, Mr. Walpole expostulated with a frankness and manly freedom which do honour to his integrity and spirit †.

He gave also a striking instance of his disinterestedness and attachment to his friends when the new administration was arranged under the auspices of lord Sunderland. Lord Townshend, after accepting the lord lieutenancy of Ireland, was dismissed in disgrace. Walpole relinquished the office of first lord of the Treasury, and his resignation was followed by those of Devonshire, Orford, Methuen and Pulteney. Sunderland and Addison were appointed secretaries of State; Stanhope first lord of the Treasury and chancellor of the Exchequer. The king, after accepting the resignation of Robert Walpole with extreme reluctance, was anxious to retain Mr. Walpole in his service, whose abilities in negotiation he

* Mr. Walpole being the bearer of the letter to Hanover, which ruined his party, was nick-named by the wits of the times Bellerophon, in allusion to the story well known in classical antiquities.

† See this spirited letter in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, Correspondence, Vol. II. p. 146, to which work the reader is referred for a circumstantial detail of the cabals which occasioned the dismission of Townshend, the resignation of Walpole, and the disunion of the Whig ministry.

duly appreciated. The grand marshal of Hanover waited on him, with a gracious message from his majesty, importing that he was much satisfied with his services, and saw no reason why he should not continue to be employed, although his relations were no longer in place. But Mr. Walpole, highly indignant at the ill-usage which the brother ministers had received, declined in terms of respect, this kind insinuation, and resigned his post of secretary to the Treasury*. Fortunately before the dismission of the ministry, he was nominated by his brother surveyor and auditor of the revenues of America, which being a sinecure place for life, insured him an income of 800*l.* a year.

From this period Mr. Walpole united his efforts with those of his party in a violent opposition, and like his brother, coalesced with the Tories, and even the Jacobites, for the purpose of thwarting all the measures of government. His name frequently occurs in the parliamentary debates on the side of opposition, although the substance of his speeches is seldom given. But he particularly distinguished himself in censuring the quadruple alliance, which, though concluded for the purpose of preserving the tran-

* Apology.

quillity of Europe, was calculated, as he thought, to produce the contrary effect *.

In the Rhapsody of Foreign Politics, or Observations on the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Mr. Walpole has introduced some excellent remarks on the quadruple alliance, which ought not to be withheld from the reader.

" I cannot omit observing, that although the principle of this treaty for ascertaining to the emperor and king Philip the portion of the Spanish succession which each of them should for the future respectively enjoy, by their mutual consent and under the guaranties of the most considerable powers, was just and wise; yet there was more dexterity and art shewn in the conduct and conditions of it, on the part of the imperial court, than there was honour and

* By this treaty the emperor renounced all pretensions to the crown of Spain, and in consequence of the claims of Elizabeth Farnese, granted the reversion of the duchies of Tuscany, Parma and Placentia, as male fiefs of the empire, to Don Carlos, her eldest son by king Philip, and her heirs male, on the deaths of the dukes of Tuscany and Parma without male issue. He promised to expedite the letters expectatitive of this reversion, which was called, in the diplomatic language of the times, the " eventual investiture," within two months after the ratification of the treaty. As an indemnification for this sacrifice in Italy, he received Sicily from the duke of Savoy, in lieu of Sardinia. The terms imposed on Philip were, the renunciation of all claims to the Netherlands, the Milanese, and the kingdom of Naples. Collection of Treaties from the end of the reign of Queen Anne to 1731, Vol. IV.

prudence on the part of England. For the divesting the king of Sicily of that island, which had been granted to him by the treaty of Utrecht, when he had done nothing to forfeit his right, and without the least provocation by his behaviour, was not very honourable. Nor was the putting the emperor in full possession of Sicily, until he had executed, on his part, what he had promised, for securing the eventual succession of Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia, to Don Carlos, (which was the condition of his having that island,) extremely prudent; for the notion of putting 6000 Swiss into the principal places of those dutchys, to answer that end, was a more dilatory and uncertain expedient, as that garrison could not be put into those places until the letters expectative, containing the eventual investiture of them to Don Carlos, had passed the dyet of the empire, which it was always in the power of the emperour to delay. Besides the tediousness of a negotiation with the Cantons, for hiring those troops, and the stipulated proposal, that the king of England should furnish 6000 men, in the mean time, to supply that want, was, I may say, ridiculous and absurd."

"Hence he was of opinion, that this alliance, calculated for terrifying all the powers of Europe, would be productive of new troubles; foresee-

ing, that when the emperor was once in actual possession of Sicily, endeavours would be used, notwithstanding the solemn engagements, to disappoint the succession of Don Carlos, should the possessors die without issue male; therefore he spoke strongly against the approbation of that treaty in parliament; and the disagreeable events which followed the conclusion of the treaty, on the part of the imperial court, sufficiently justified his observation."*

Soon after the resignation of his friends, and the change of administration, Mr. Walpole joined the Tories and Jacobites, in a question trifling in itself, which however shewed that he was no less inflamed than his brother by the spirit of party. Sir William Wyndham, who was just discharged from the Tower, having moved that Dr. Snape, one of the king's chaplains, and master of Eton School, should preach before the House, on the anniversary of the restoration of Charles the Second, the motion was seconded by Shippen; but vehemently opposed by the ministerial Whigs, who contended that Dr. Snape had recently attacked the champion † of

* Apology.

† Hoadley, bishop of Bangor, who published a Preservative against the Principles and Practices of Non-jurors, and a Sermon on the Nature of the Kingdom of Christ. These two publications were censured by the convocation, and the sermon was answered by Dr. Snape.

the Revolution and Protestant succession, and defended passive obedience and non-resistance. Mr. Walpole defended Dr. Snape with no less warmth, and observed, it was unusual to put the negative on any man whom a member had thought fit to name, and that Dr. Snape was a person of great merit and learning. His brother also spoke highly in his commendation, and the question was carried by a majority of ten votes.*

The zeal which Mr. Walpole displayed in behalf of the Whigs who had quitted the ministry, and adhered to the prince of Wales, exposed him to the censures of the court party, and he had the honour of being satirised in the political ballad called the "Seven Wise Men," which he thus mentions in a letter to his brother, dated July 2, 1791. "The inclosed ballad, in answer to what was made upon the thirteen kings, is highly valued by the court party; it is supposed to be the product of Mr. Craggs' sense and his man Tickle's poetry, which is all I shall say of it, especially since I think they have done me a great deal of honour." Mr. Walpole was classed with his brother, as forming together one of the seven wise men who governed the prince of Wales, and even his successful negotiations in

* Tindal, vol. 19, p. 132, 133.

Holland, in the true spirit of party, were made the object of ridicule.*

In the debates on the South Sea scheme Mr. Walpole took an active part; at the opening of the business he confessed that the scheme was weak in its projection, villainous in its execution, and calamitous in its end; but he warmly seconded his brother's endeavours to prepare a remedy before they instituted an enquiry. During the proceedings he inveighed against the rapacity, pride, and insolence of the directors, and was severe in his censures of Sir John Blunt, whom he considered as the contriver and chief promoter of the mischief.

When the unfortunate failure of the South Sea scheme compelled the earls of Sunderland and Stanhope to court the assistance of Townshend and Walpole, Mr. Walpole again came into office as secretary to the duke of Grafton, lord lieutenant of Ireland, and suggested a plan for reducing the expence of the military establishment, which was highly approved by the king.

* "The Walpoles twain but one I count,
"For say whate'er they can,
"Although two wags, they do amount
"But just to one wise man."
* * * * * * * *
"To the purpose Horace did not much,
"But made a heavy splutter,
"Of treaties when he bit the Dutch
"On the fam'd point of butter."

The deaths of Sunderland and Stanhope having restored the brother ministers to the full confidence of the sovereign, and to their posts of secretary of State and first lord of the Treasury, he was again associated in their political labours, and employed in various commissions of high trust and delicacy.

The distresses of the nation at this juncture caused great disaffection in all ranks of people; and suspicions, justly entertained, of the corrupt interposition of the Hanoverian ministers and mistresses, in favour of the South Sea scheme, rendered the king extremely unpopular, and excited a conspiracy for the restoration of the dethroned family, which is distinguished by the name of Atterbury's Plot. Full information being conveyed to the British ministers from the regent of France, and confirmed by intercepted letters, active preparations were made to repel invasion; and Mr. Walpole was again deputed to the Hague, for the purpose of requiring succours of men to be ready for immediate embarkation in case of necessity.

On his arrival at the Hague, in May 1722, he experienced much greater difficulties than during his first mission in 1715. The minds of the people were alienated from England by the negligence of the British government in sending back the Dutch troops, who had been granted

in 1715, in the midst of a severe winter. Lord Cadogan had irritated the republican party by his imprudent zeal, in publicly promoting the election of the prince of Orange to the stadtholdership of Groningen, and by favouring his pretensions to that of Guelderland; he had still more highly exasperated the magistrates of Amsterdam, by threatening, in his convivial moments, to compel the province of Holland to follow the example of Groningen.

Notwithstanding these and other difficulties, Mr. Walpole succeeded in the object of his mission, and, in less than a fortnight, obtained a resolution of the States General, to hold in readiness 3000 men for the service of the king of England. He principally owed his success, in this difficult negotiation, to the zeal of his confidential friends Fagel and Slingelandt, to the assistance of Hornbeck, who had succeeded Heinsius in the office of pensionary, and to his address in softening the republican party, and conciliating the magistrates of Amsterdam. The leading members of the republic did him the justice to declare, that, considering the indisposition of the States of Holland, no other person could have succeeded in this delicate commission.

On the 25th of June 1722, he took leave of the States, and returned to England, where he

continued an useful and indefatigable co-adjutor to lord Townshend and his brother, until his known talents for negotiation brought him upon the public theatre of Europe in a more enlarged sphere of action.

CHAPTER 3.

1723.

Mission of Mr. Walpole to Paris—Subjects of his Correspondence —Character of the Duke of Orleans, and Detail of the principal Events which led to the Union between France and England—Account of Torcy—Recal of Lord Stair, and Mission of Schaub to Paris—Administration, Death, and Character of Du Bois—The Duke of Orleans becomes Prime Minister —Contest for pre-eminence in the British Cabinet.

THE mission of Mr. Walpole to Paris forms an important epoch in his own life, as well as in the administration of his brother. I have shewn in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, that this mission was occasioned by a party struggle between Townshend and Walpole, on one hand, and Carteret on the other; and that the appointment of Mr. Walpole to the embassy of Paris was the prelude to the dismission of Carteret, and the ascendancy of the brother ministers in the British cabinet.

His original correspondence during the period of his embassy details a series of events highly interesting to France, to England and to Europe. These letters contain the secret history of the court of Versailles from 1723 to 1730; they relate the death of the duke of Orleans, the ad

ministration of the Duke of Bourbon, the final ascendancy of cardinal Fleury, and the strict union established between France and England. They collaterally refer to the situation and conduct of the courts of Vienna and Madrid; they minutely describe the abdication of Philip the Fifth, the short reign of Louis the First, the resumption of the crown by Philip, and the disunion of Spain and France. They detail the negotiations for the treaties of Hanover and Vienna, for the congresses of Cambray and Soissons, the reconciliation of Spain and France, the conclusion of the treaty of Seville, and the reunion of England with the house of Austria.

From this correspondence I shall select an historical narrative of the most interesting events, which will be illustrated by other authentic documents.

To convey a just idea of the situation of the court of France at the time of Mr. Walpole's arrival at Paris, it is necessary to take a retrospective view of the character of the duke of Orleans, and of those events in his administration which led to the union between France and England.

Philip duke of Orleans, who is better distinguished by the title of Regent of France, was son of Philip duke of Orleans, brother of Louis the Fourteenth, by Elizabeth of Bavaria his

second wife *. He was born in 1674, and gave striking proofs of quick comprehension, lively parts, and great talents. At an early period he highly distinguished himself in the military line; at the age of seventeen he was intrusted with the command of the corps de reserve at the battle of Steinkirk, where he was wounded in the shoulder; and at the battle of Nerwinden in 1693, he displayed heroic intrepidity, and was five times surrounded by the enemy. In 1706 he commanded the French army at the celebrated siege of Turin, and had his advice been followed, according to the honourable testimony of prince Eugene himself, the siege would not have been raised. Instead of waiting the approach of the enemy within the lines, which were too extensive to be defended, he proposed to lead the army to the attack, but was overruled in a council of war, and thwarted by the obstinacy of general Marsin, who had been associated with him in the command with powers to controul his conduct. But when the lines were forced, and the French army thrown into confusion, when Marsin was taken prisoner, and La Feuillade, the next in authority, overwhelmed with despair, was incapable of acting, the duke of Orleans resumed the

* His first wife was Henrietta, daughter of Charles the First, by whom he had one daughter, Anna Maria, who espoused Victor Amadeus, king of Sardinia.

command, and made the most heroic exertions. Though twice wounded he continued in the hottest of the action, and when the troops gave way, called the officers by their names, animated the soldiers by his voice, and led the troops repeatedly to the charge. Overcome at length by pain, and weakened by loss of blood, he was compelled to retire until his wounds were dressed; but instantly returned to the field of battle, performed the duties of a general and a soldier, and when the disorder and confusion became irreparable, by his presence of mind and skill saved the remnant of the army. The king and nation did justice to his military talents, and the successful campaign which he made in Spain increased his reputation.

Having offended by his sarcastic railleries, the princess Ursini, and Madame de Maintenon, and excited the jealousy of Philip the Fifth by aspiring to the crown of Spain, he lost the command, and was never afterwards employed by Louis the Fourteenth.

Being thus reduced to a state of inactivity and disgrace, he gave a loose to his passions and broke out into those infamous excesses which disgrace his memory, and to which he was instigated by the example and encouragement of his preceptor du Bois. If it were possible to draw a veil over these enormities, no prince was ever

more highly distinguished for personal accomplishments, engaging manners, winning affability, charms of conversation, and love of science: even in the midst of his excesses, he was adored by all ranks of people, who attributed his vices to du Bois, and his virtues to himself.

The vindictive spirit of Madame de Maintenon followed him in his retirement; the premature deaths of the dauphin, the dukes of Burgundy and Berry were attributed to poison, and the duke of Orleans was accused of an intention to secure the crown of France by the murder of the whole of the royal family. These infamous reports were countenanced by Madame de Maintenon for the advancement of her darling the duke of Maine, and made a deep impression on the mind of Louis the Fourteenth. In consequence of these ill-grounded suspicions, and from a misplaced affection to his natural son the duke of Maine, the king, by his will, instead of declaring the duke of Orleans sole regent, restricted his authority by a council of regency, and by intrusting to the duke of Maine the protection of the young sovereign's person, the superintendance of his education, the command of his guard, and the government of his household. But this will being annulled by parliament, through the influence, and on the repre-

sentations of the duke of Orleans, he was declared sole regent, with more enlarged powers. The first acts of his administration were to appoint seven councils for the management of public affairs, and to hold a bed of justice, in which the king assisted to confirm the new regulations.

The peculiar situations of the duke of Orleans and George the First changed the discordant politics of the two cabinets, and united the interests of England and France. By the treaty of Utrecht it was stipulated, that the crowns of France and Spain should never be joined in the same person; and Philip duke of Anjou was acknowledged king of Spain on renouncing his right to the crown of France, which was to devolve on the duke of Orleans should Louis the Fifteenth die without issue male. The young monarch being of a sickly constitution, this event was not improbable; and Philip, notwithstanding his renunciation, entertained designs of ascending the throne of France, and was countenanced by a considerable party in the kingdom. Hence the duke of Orleans, threatened with the loss of the succession, favourably received the overtures of England as the only power able to support his right; and George the First was equally anxious to conciliate the friendship of France, as the prin-

cipal means of counteracting the schemes of the jacobites, and annihilating the hopes of the pretender. When their interests thus concurred, it was not difficult to adjust the conditions of a treaty of alliance; after a few obstacles and delays, occasioned by the volatile character of the regent, a negotiation was commenced by the earl of Stair at Paris, continued by Mr. Walpole and Chateauneuf the French minister at the Hague, and finally concluded by secretary Stanhope and du Bois the confidential friend of the regent.

The principal articles of the treaty which formed the bond of union between the two countries, were, on the side of the regent, to send the pretender beyond the Alps; and on the part of George the First, to guaranty, in conformity with the peace of Utrecht, the eventual succession of the house of Orleans to the crown of France. This singular alliance, concluded on the 21st of August 1716, formed the commencement of a new æra in the political annals of Europe, and united the rival powers of France and England, whose enmity had deluged Europe with blood, and whose union produced a long and unexampled period of peace and tranquillity.

From the conclusion of this treaty the great object of the English cabinet was directed to

keep the regent steady to his engagements, through the channel of du Bois, who was gratified with a large pension from the king of England*. To attain this point, it was necessary to procure the dismission of Villars, Noailles, Torcy, and d'Uxelles, who were attached to the old system, and gradually to raise du Bois to the office of prime minister. But to compass this scheme was no easy task; for, notwithstanding the wonderful ascendancy which du Bois had acquired over his illustrious pupil, the regent did not without great reluctance consign to him the supreme direction of the State.

Misinformed writers have asserted, that the advancement of du Bois was as unobstructed as it was rapid, and that the duke of Orleans was as eager to promote him as he was to be promoted. The dispatches of the earl of †Stair prove the falsity of these unqualified assertions, and shew that the regent hesitated, that du Bois almost despaired of conquering his repugnance, and that his success was principally owing to the influence of the English cabinet, by which the regent from personal motives was governed.

* St. Simon affirms that this pension was 40,000*l.* but this sum was so enormous at that period as to render it probable that he was misinformed.

† Hardwicke's State Papers, vol. 2.

The appointment of du Bois to the direction of foreign affairs was a prelude to the success of the whole plan. This arrangement was so essential to the British cabinet, that lord Stair considered it as "the surest pledge for the support of those measures in the promotion of which the abbot had been the chief instrument." Du Bois was no sooner nominated to this post, than he artfully appropriated to himself the management of the most secret transactions; all affairs of importance passed through his hands alone, and the councils established at the commencement of the regency were suppressed, though the respective ministers were permitted to retain their appointments.*

Having thus obtained for du Bois the management of foreign affairs, the next attempt of the English cabinet was to effect the dismission of the marquis de Torcy, secretary of State, the inveterate enemy of England, and the ablest minister in the French cabinet.

John Baptiste marquis de Torcy, second son of the great Colbert, was born in 1665; brought up under the auspices and improved by the instructions of his celebrated father, he was soon initiated in state affairs, and commenced at a very early period his diplomatic career as secre-

* Duclos Memoires Secrets, T. 1, p. 408.

tary and envoy in different courts of Europe. In the twenty-second year of his age he was appointed secretary of State for foreign affairs. He distinguished himself in the negotiations which took place on the death of Charles the Second, king of Spain, in regard to the succession of the Spanish dominions, at the congress of Gertruydenberg, and in the conferences which settled the peace of Utrecht. A striking proof of his ability is given in the history of these transactions published after his death from his papers*; it is one of the most curious monuments of the superiority of the French cabinet in every species of intrigue and address in negotiation.

Torcy continued to enjoy, during the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, the full confidence of his sovereign, and was engaged in secretly promoting the success of the invasion against England, and in making excuses for permitting the pretender to reside in Loraine. On the death of Louis the Fourteenth, he was continued in the ministry, as the only person versed in the management of foreign transactions; his capacity for affairs, and the talent which he possessed of rendering business agreeable to the regent, made him a necessary instrument in the admi-

* Memoires de Torcy pour servir à l'Histoire des Negociations, depuis le Traité de Ryswick jusqu' à la paix d'Utrecht.

nistration. But Torcy * had become obnoxious to George the First, and to the Whigs who directed the counsels of England at this period, by his declaration to lord Bolingbroke concerning the nullity of any renunciation which could be made by Philip duke of Anjou to the crown of France †.

* Torcy is represented by the French writers, and particularly by St. Simon, who knew him personally, as remarkable for the mildness of his manners and the placidness of his temper; yet the earl of Stair has recorded an instance which proves a great want of self-command, and a peevish aversion to the English, at a time when it was the interest of the French court to continue on good terms with them.—See Hardwicke's Papers, vol. ii. p. 530, 535.

† Though the peace of Utrecht had obliged the Spanish branch of the Bourbon family to renounce by oath the right of succession to the crown of France; yet the doctrine of its invalidity, as an act void ab initio, had been publicly avowed. Torcy frankly owned to lord Bolingbroke, "The renunciation desired would be null and invalid by the fundamental laws of France, according to which laws the nearest prince to the crown is of necessity the heir. This law is considered as the work of Him who has established all monarchies, and we are persuaded in France that God only can abolish it. No renunciation therefore can destroy it; and if the king of Spain should renounce it for the sake of peace, and in obedience to his grandfather, they would deceive themselves, who received it as a sufficient expedient to prevent the mischief we purpose to avoid."—See Report of the Secret Committee, p. 13.

Torcy made no scruple of publicly declaring that this expedient, which had been devised to prevent the union of France and Spain under one monarch, could be of little force, as being inconsistent with the fundamental laws of France. "This declaration," observes a judicious author, "gives a remarkable instance of the weakness or wickedness of that administration,

The interest of England concurring with the inclinations of du Bois, who was jealous lest Torcy should supplant him in the management of foreign affairs, his dismission was obtained principally by the artful management of lord Stair. The address he employed in thus completing the triumph of du Bois is recorded in his journal*, and will afford a striking picture of the great ascendancy which England at that period possessed in the cabinet of Versailles.

On many other occasions du Bois employed the interest of the English ambassador with the regent, of which two curious instances are recorded by Duclos. While his agent Lafiteau was ineffectually soliciting the pope to confer on him the dignity of cardinal, the pretender, who had retired to Rome, offered his turn of nomination to du Bois, provided he would procure the payment of his pension, which was considerably in arrears. Du Bois, however, not only declined accepting the nomination, on a condition which would have ruined his credit at London; but obtained the intercession of George the First, and the emperor, in his favour.

who could build the peace of Europe on so sandy a foundation, and accept of terms which France itself was honest enough to own were not to be maintained." Letter to Two Great Men, p. 20.

* Hardwicke's States Papers, vol. ij.

During this transaction the archbishopric of Cambray becoming vacant, he coveted that high dignity, as a means of rendering him more worthy of the purple. But finding the regent disinclined to promote a person of his dissolute character, to a see recently filled by the venerable Fenelon; du Bois adopted the same plan which he followed in regard to the cardinal's hat. He wrote to des Touches*, the French agent at London, to request that George the First would apply to the regent. The king, on receiving the application, burst into laughter; "Sire," said des Touches, who was in great favour with the king, "I feel no less than your majesty the singularity of the application; but it will be of the greatest importance to my interest to obtain it." "How," replied George, continuing to laugh, "shall a protestant prince interfere in making an archbishop of France? The regent himself will laugh, and pay no attention to my recommendation." "Excuse me, Sire," returned des Touches, "he will laugh indeed, but he will grant it; first out of respect to your majesty, and secondly for its singularity. Besides, du Bois is the person on whom my fu-

* Des Touches was well known as the author of several excellent comedies, and was chosen a member of the French academy. He himself communicated this anecdote to Duclos, vol. ii. p. 82.

ture condition in life totally depends, he will ruin me if I do not obtain from your majesty an urgent letter on this occasion; here it is already written; and the kindness with which your majesty has honoured me, leads me to hope that you will not refuse your signature." "Give it me," said the king, "since it will be of so much service to you;" and he signed it. The dispatch was immediately forwarded; the regent was convinced that du Bois had suggested this measure; but his appointment did not the less take place.

Lord Stair having quarrelled with Law, the director of the finances, earl Stanhope, secretary of State, who had long been in habits of the strictest intimacy with the regent, repaired to Paris, and settled with him and du Bois the plan of future intercourse. Lord Stair being recalled, Sir Richard Sutton was deputed to Paris, and, after a short stay, succeeded by Mr. afterwards Sir Luke Schaub, a native of Basle, who had served as private secretary to earl Stanhope, and was principally employed in penning his foreign dispatches. After passing a year at Madrid, in the character of English agent, he was selected by lord Carteret to convey to du Bois the strongest assurances from the king of England, that the death of lord Stanhope would occasion no alteration in the conduct of the Bri-

tish cabinet, who would persevere in maintaining the connection with France, and in pursuing the same system of politics which had proved so advantageous to both countries. Du Bois, whose influence over the regent depended on the friendship of the British cabinet, affectionately received his friend Schaub, as the messenger of joyful tidings.

The failure of the Mississippi scheme, which reduced France to a bankruptcy, and the disgrace of Law, served to increase the ascendancy of du Bois, and left him without a rival in the affections of the regent. Having succeeded in obtaining the archbishopric of Cambray, and the dignity of cardinal, he was finally raised, by the influence of England, through the agency of his friend Schaub, to the office of prime minister. But he did not long enjoy that elevated station; he died on the 10th of August 1723, in the 67th year of his age.

William du Bois, who thus attained the highest station in church and state, was the son of an apothecary in Limousin, and was born in 1656. Chance having made him sub-preceptor to the duke of Orleans, his supple temper, insinuating manners, versatile talents, and indefatigable perseverance in promoting his own views, raised him to the highest honours and employments of the State. The notorious in-

famy of his private character has induced superficial observers to deny him abilities which he really possessed, and not sufficiently to appreciate his capacity for public business, and talents for negotiation.

In fact he did not solely gain the favour of his pupil by flattering his passions and pandering to his vices, but he inspired him with a love of science, rendered natural philosophy easy and familiar, and instructed him in political knowledge. He also accompanied the young prince in some of his campaigns, and displayed at the battle of Steinkirk a striking instance of personal valour and humanity. Marshal Luxembourg, who commanded in that memorable engagement, said to Louis the Fourteenth, who mentioned that the abbé Pelisson died without confession, "I know another abbé who might die in the same situation." "Who?" enquired the king. "The abbé du Bois," returned Luxembourg, "who intrepidly exposed himself to danger in the battle of Steinkirk. I met him in every part of the field." At the conclusion of the engagement he prevailed on the duke of Chartres to give orders for the removal and care of the wounded; he wrote also an account of the battle with equal spirit and precision, and his letter pleased and surprised Louis the Fourteenth.

St. Simon has in his Memoirs agreeably detailed the circumstances of his extraordinary rise; but, in drawing his portrait, has delineated his vices, and forgotten his abilities. Marshal Villars, however, speaks* more favourably of his public character. During the last year of his life, the enormous load of public business, and the ill state of his health, rendered him incapable of executing the duties of his office with his accustomed facility. The affairs of State were consequently in great disorder at his death, and hence, perhaps, arose the imputation of negligence and incapacity.

On the death of du Bois the duke of Orleans resumed the reins of government, in the quality of prime minister, and appeared like a man relieved from a great burthen, recalling all those whom the cardinal had banished from court, and expressing the most marked contempt for his memory †. Fortunately, however, his inter-

* On lui trouvoit beaucoup d'esprit, mais il avoit mauvaise reputation pour les moeurs. Son maître avoit eté le premier à en parler assez mal, mais sitôt que le cardinal n'eut plus d'autre intérêt que celui de l'etat, il y parut entiérement dévoue: cherchant l'amitie et l'approbation des honnêtes gens, et voulant, disoit-il, punir les fripons. Enfin, sa mort fut regardée comme une perte dans la conjoncture presente." Memoires de Villars, t. iii. p. 80.

† If we may credit Schaub, whose excessive attachment to du Bois renders him a suspicious panegyrist, the duke of Orleans was highly affected with his death, and burst into a flood of tears when he announced it to the king.

ests concurring with the inclinations of the English ministry, no alteration ensued in the friendship established between France and England. The appointment of Morville, as successor to du Bois, in the direction of foreign affairs, at the recommendation of the English cabinet, sufficiently proved the inclination of the duke of Orleans to maintain the union with England.

Although the death of du Bois did not produce any change in the situation of the two courts; yet it occasioned the recal of the English minister at Paris, and brought Mr. Horace Walpole upon the political theatre at a critical period.

The British cabinet was divided into two parties; the one headed by lord Townshend, secretary of State for the northern department, and Walpole, who was first lord of the Treasury; the other was led by lord Carteret, secretary of State for the southern department, who had succeeded to the influence of Sunderland and Stanhope. A violent struggle for ascendancy ensued, and was still undecided, when the king repaired to Hanover, in July 1723. He was accompanied by the two secretaries of State, and during their absence Walpole executed their office in England. The Hanoverian junto was likewise divided into two parties, who ranged themselves under the duchess of Kendal and

the countess of Darlington. Lord Townshend had secured the duchess of Kendal, while lord Carteret gained lady Darlington, with Bernsdorf, Bothmar, and the principal Hanoverian ministers. Carteret possessed superior knowledge and great abilities, and conciliated the favour of the king, by his acquaintance with the German language, and by flattering his German prejudices. In virtue of his post as secretary for the southern department, the correspondence with the court of Versailles passed through his hands; his attachment to the principles of Sunderland and Stanhope secured the confidence of du Bois; and his influence in the cabinet of Versailles was increased by the representations of Sir Luke Schaub, that he solely directed the system of foreign affairs, and was the only minister who was anxious to preserve the connection between the two countries.

With a view still farther to ingratiate himself with the king, he promoted a scheme suggested by Schaub, to negotiate a marriage between Amelia, countess of Platen, niece of lady Darlington, and the count de St. Florentin, and to procure, through the influence of the king, a dukedom for his father the marquis de la Vrilliere. The king warmly seconded this proposal; he agreed to portion the bride, and permitted Schaub to employ his name in soliciting the

dukedom from du Bois, provided the grant could be obtained without difficulty, and without offending the nobility of France. Schaub having readily secured the concurrence of du Bois, Carteret contrived to retain the negotiation in his own hands, and accompanied the king to Hanover, in order to conclude it with the greater secrecy. Rumours however of the transaction transpiring, the secret was confidentially communicated by Carteret to lord Townshend, and thus became known to the duchess of Kendal, who was jealous of the family of Platen.

In this situation of affairs the death of du Bois defeated the views of Carteret, and paved the way to the ascendency of Townshend and Walpole, by the recal of Schaub, and the appointment of Mr. Horace Walpole to the embassy at Paris. Although Sir Luke Schaub had conducted the affairs of his mission with great address; yet being a foreigner, and without distinction, either from birth or connections, he could not have so long continued in this station, had not the protection of Stanhope, Sunderland and Carteret, and his personal credit with du Bois, concurred to render his presence at Paris conducive to the maintenance of the pacific system. In consequence of his attachment to Carteret, he became obnoxious to

Townshend and Walpole, and they eagerly embraced the opportunity which the death of du Bois presented, of lessening his credit with the king. Townshend represented that the continuance of Schaub at Paris would be prejudicial to his majesty's affairs, in consequence of the personal enmity of count Nocé, who had been banished by the cardinal, and considered Schaub as the cause of his disgrace. Being now reinstated in his former favour, he was supposed to be the person who would govern the duke of Orleans. Lord Townshend therefore suggested the propriety of deputing to Paris a person capable of ascertaining the state of the French cabinet and the real influence of Schaub; he recommended Mr. Horace Walpole as best qualified for this delicate charge, and to avoid disgusting lord Carteret, proposed that his brother-in-law should not assume a diplomatic character, but appear to pass through Paris in his way to Hanover. The king's consent was the signal of victory, and Townshend triumphantly announces to Walpole the beneficial consequences which must result from this step. "If Horace Walpole executes his commission with his usual dexterity, the effect will either be that he will make such discoveries as must end in getting Schaub recalled, or at least that Schaub, finding we have credit enough to get so near a relation

sent over to superintend him, will so far consider his own situation, as to act in a more open and sincere manner towards us, and think it necessary to make a merit to himself, of appearing to throw that interest into our hands, which, after such a tacit declaration in our favour, it may no longer be in his power to withhold from us. And as that interest has hitherto been the chief, and is at present in a manner the only hold and support of our antagonists, this affair, if managed with discretion, will wound them in the most vital and sensible part *."

This transaction was settled without the knowledge of lord Carteret; but soon afterwards the king, at the suggestion of lord Townshend, ordered him to expedite credential letters to Mr. Walpole for the purpose of admitting the king of Portugal into the quadruple alliance. Carteret reluctantly obeyed, and Townshend again announced his success. "This indubitable mark of confidence towards us, and neglect towards Carteret and Schaub, cannot fail to induce the duke of Orleans and the French minister to open themselves to my brother Horace, and to court our friendship. And the king's putting so near a relation of ours over

* Lord Townshend to Robert Walpole, Hanover, Sept. 25, 1723. Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 268.

Schaub's head, in a court, where the whole secret of affairs centers at present in lord Carteret's province, and in the strength and heart of his interest, will be such a publication to the world of the superiority of our credit, that I think a stronger neither can nor ought to be desired at present.* * * * *

"This mortifying stroke, I assure you, has so astonished lord Carteret, that I never observed in him, on any occasion, such visible marks of despair *."

With respect to the affair of the dukedom, which lord Townshend foresaw would encounter many difficulties, Mr. Walpole was instructed neither to oppose it, lest he should offend the king, or to interfere in the negotiation, if he could avoid it with prudence.

* Lord Townshend to Robert Walpole, October 25, 1723. Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 281.

CHAPTER 4.

1723.

State of the French Court and Character of the Ministers on the Arrival of Mr. Walpole at Paris — Embarrassments from Sir Luke Schaub, and from the Affair of the Dukedom — Confidential Intercourse with Count Nocé and the Duke of Orleans — Sudden Death of the Duke of Orleans.

MR. WALPOLE arrived at Paris on the 19th of October, and on the 1st of November forwarded to lord Townshend his first dispatch, containing a most perspicuous and interesting account of the French court and ministry. The answer of lord Townshend will shew the extreme satisfaction which the king derived from this communication.

"Hanover, Nov. 27—Dec. 8.

"Not thinking it proper to have Mr. Thomas come over to the Gohre, I desired him to stay at this place till our return hither; and I now take the first opportunity of dispatching him back to you, that you may have the satisfaction of knowing that the relations you sent by him were highly acceptable to the king, who expressed himself with the greatest kindness and affection towards you on this occasion, and declared that he never had at any time received

so sensible and satisfactory an account of the situation of persons and affairs at the French court."

Mr. Walpole found the duke of Orleans in full possession of absolute authority, and managing the vast and complicated machine of State with a skill and facility equal to his great talents; but which the dissoluteness of his life did not seem to promise.

Louis the Fifteenth was at this period only in his fourteenth year; in 1722 he had been declared out of his minority, and after being crowned at Rheims, ostensibly assumed the reins of government. He was of a weak and sickly habit, and shewed no marks of that robust and hardy frame, which afterwards supported such incessant fatigue. He was affectionately devoted to his preceptor Fleury, but wholly governed in affairs of State by the duke of Orleans; and the ministers were either persons of inferior capacity, or of little consequence.

Armenonville, the keeper of the seals, was without weight or capacity, and is characterised by the duke of Orleans in the celebrated pasquinade* against the ministry of du Bois, as

* In the midst of a large society of ladies, noblemen, men of letters, and artists, assembled at the house of madame d'Auverne, the duke of Orleans affected to quote a pasquinade, which he pretended was recently published against himself and his administration, "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "the

thus addressing himself to the russian embassador. " Are you come, sir, to cousult me as keeper of the seals, or as financier? I must

French are extremely malicious in publishing the most severe libels against me and the ministers. They feign that the czar of Russia, finding the French government wiser than those of the other nations which he has visited, has just sent an envoy, express, to request the assistance of my counsels. The ambassador makes me a flattering eulogium on the part of his master, to which I reply, " His czarish majesty, sir, does me great honour, by his good opinion of my capacity, which I do not merit. Louis the Fourteenth, from a principle of jealousy, removed me from his councils; my studies have been confined to the belles lettres, chymistry, painting, and music. My birth, it is true, called me to the regency, but I do not interfere in the government any otherwise than to plan edicts when I am intoxicated in the evening, with my boon companions, which annul those of the preceding evening. I am concerned that I am not able to assist your master in his great projects; but go to cardinal du Bois."

" The embassador accordingly repairing to du Bois, and delivering the prince's message, the cardinal replied, " The duke of Orleans is joking, without doubt, in sending you to me. Where does he think I have learnt to govern well? I am the son of a village apothecary. I began my career at Paris, as servant to a doctor of the Sorbonne; my good stars made me sub-preceptor to the regent, who loaded me with dignities, without giving me capacity. Besides I am eaten up with disease, which consumes me, and prevents me, even if I had the capacity, from transacting the affairs of France. Go then, to the keeper of the seals, and the other ministers."

After drawing the characters of Armenonville, Maurepas, Breteuil, Dodun and la Vrilliere, which are inserted in the text, the duke of Orleans concluded: " Voila comment l'ambassadeur courant de l'un à l'autre ministre sans rien pouvoir apprendre, s'en retourna à sa cour comme il etoit venu."

frankly inform you, that I am acquainted with my own finances, but not with those of the king; and as keeper of the seals, papers are sent me to seal, but I am not permitted to read them. I have no other merit than that of good-will."

His son, count Morville, appointed to the office of secretary of State on the death of cardinal du Bois, was, like his father, a man of integrity and good-will; but little acquainted with foreign affairs, and extremely embarrassed, in transacting business. The principal cause of his elevation was derived from his devotion to England. He is characterised even by Schaub, who was prejudiced in his favour, as possessed of great good sense and prudence, but without shining talents.

Mr. Walpole, in his first dispatch to lord Townshend, speaks of him as "an honest man, that does the business of his office to the satisfaction of his master, without any other confidence or aim at power," and as "cordially disposed to keep a good understanding with England."

Jean Frederic count de Maurepas, of the branch of Philippeaux Pontchartrin, was at the head of the marine department; he was born in 1701, and, in the seventeenth year of his age, was named secretary of State, by the

duke of Orleans, as a recompence to his grandfather, the count de Pontchartrin, chancellor, who resigned his charge, that he might not make the will of Louis the Fourteenth, which limited the power of the regent. He was nominated superintendant of the king's household in 1718, and placed at the head of the Admiralty in 1723*.

In the pasquinade Maurepas is thus characterised, as apostrophising the russian embassador. "I should be happy to be useful to his czarish majesty; but I trust he will have the goodness to wait until I am acquainted with business. I have sense, an inclination to learn, and love for the king and the state; but I am just come from school, and have seen no other vessel than one which ascended the Seine, two years ago, and those of two feet high which are made to amuse boys of my age. I do not however despair of one day rendering myself serviceable to his czarish majesty; but I have hitherto only been a lively and mischievous boy."

Breteuil, the minister at war, was son of the

* He continued in different employments until 1749, when he was banished by the influence of madame de Pompadour, whom he had satirised. He remained in exile during the whole reign of Louis the Fifteenth, but, on the accession of Louis the Sixteenth, was recalled, and, though he held no official employment, was considered as prime minister. He died in 1781 in the eighty-second year of his age.

intendant of Languedoc, and became himself intendant of the Limosin. He appears to have solely owed his elevation to his address in stealing the leaf of the register of a village in the Limosin, containing the entry of du Bois's marriage, which the cardinal had commissioned him to secure*. In reward for this service du Bois called him from his petty office of intendant, to succeed le Blanc as minister of war, although he was totally unacquainted with military concerns. Though not deficient in talents, he was a man of extreme ignorance, and no less vanity, of which St. Simon has recorded two ridiculous instances†. In the pasquinade of the duke of Orleans, Breteuil is thus introduced as speaking to the russian embassador. "To whom, sir, do you address yourself? It is true, I am secretary at war: but I have seen no other troops than the regiment which passed through Limoges while I was intendant."

Dodun comptroller-general is thus characterised: "I was formerly counsellor of the parliament, and actually reported a cause; but the duke of Orleans made me comptroller-general, and I confess myself totally unacquainted with the duties of my office."

* St. Simon relates this anecdote at length, but the authors of the Dictionnaire Historique call it in question.

† Oeuvres de St. Simon, Tom. 12, p. 231, 236.

Henry Philippeaux, compte de St. Florentin, son of Louis Philippeaux, marquis de la Vrilliere, succeeded his father on his dismission from the office of secretary of State, February 17, 1723. At this period he was only 18 years of age, and as he was totally without experience, to him might be applied the pasquinade of the duke of Orleans on his father. "Behold, sir," he says to the russian embassador, "the form of our lettres de cachet, that is all with which I am yet acquainted. Here is one to immure an unfortunate priest in the Bastile. This is all that I do, and all I know how to do. I give it you with great satisfaction, and you may transmit it to your master, who employs similar methods to send his subjects into Siberia." This was the person * who afterwards espoused Amelia, countess of Platen, the pretensions of whose family to a dukedom occasioned so much embarrassment to Mr. Walpole, and hastened the recal of Sir Luke Schaub.

The bishop of Frejus, afterwards well known under the denomination of cardinal Fleury, discreetly remained in the back ground of the pic-

* Louis Philippeaux, the father, died in 1725; and Henry, the son, continued in the office of secretary of State until 1736, when he was appointed garde des sceaux, in the place of Chauvelin. He became chancellor to the queen in 1743, and in 1770 was created duke de la Vrilliere. Des Bas Dictionnaire de la Noblesse.

ture, and the whole weight of affairs rested upon the duke of Orleans. Mr. Walpole commended, in the strongest terms, his great talents for business, and the general satisfaction and tranquillity which prevailed under his administration.

Count Nocé, whose name often occurs in the early correspondence of Mr. Walpole, though not a member of the administration, had considerable influence over the duke of Orleans, as a votary of wit and pleasure, and as a boon companion in his convivial hours. He was a man of a volatile and capricious disposition, solely addicted to his amusements, and averse to business: he repeatedly declined all offices of trust or emolument, and piqued himself on his independence. Although he affected never to interfere in public affairs, yet he occasionally suggested hints, and exerted his great influence over his patron in his hours of relaxation. Hence he was assiduously courted by du Bois, in the early period of the regency; and facilitated his rise at the intercession of madame de Tencin*, who carried on an intrigue with both, but was most devoted to the abbot.

* Claudine Alexandrine, usually styled madame de Tencin, was of an illustrious family in the province of Dauphiné. She took the veil, and resided in the monastery of Mont Fleury, near Grenoble; but, disgusted with the life of a nun, obtained, through the interest of Fontenelle, a brief from the pope to

At length du Bois having firmly established his credit with the regent, neglected Nocé in his applications for favours, who, provoked at

quit the cloister. She soon afterwards came to Paris, and rendered herself conspicuous by her beauty, talents, gallantries, and political intrigues.

At the instigation of Torcy, she made successful advances to lord Bolingbroke, during his embassy at Paris, became a spy upon his conduct, and stole from him some papers of considerable importance. She had less success with the duke of Orleans, with whom she was employed to ingratiate herself on the death of Louis the Fourteenth, by D'Argenson, lieutenant de police. With a view to effect her purpose, she pretended to be violently in love with him: but the duke, suspecting the snare, was not duped by her blandishments. About the same time she captivated du Bois, and became privately his mistress, the depositary of his secrets, and the directress of his designs. On his elevation she appeared publicly as his mistress, domineered over him and his household, and was the source of honours and court favours. On his death she totally lost her influence; but lived in a magnificent style, as she had acquired a considerable fortune, during the frenzy of the Mississippi scheme, by the assistance of Law, who was also one of her admirers. Her house continued the rendezvous of men of gallantry and letters, and among her numerous lovers was la Fresney, a counsellor of the parliament, who having a violent quarrel with her, killed himself in her apartment. Being accused of abetting the murder, she was imprisoned in the Chatelet, and from thence transferred to the Bastile; but her innocence appearing on examination, she was released, and entered again into the world. She was author of several novels, of which the principal are Memoires de Comminges, and Les Malheurs de l'Amour. Some of her writings partake of the licentiousness of her life, and she may be said, like Mrs. Behm, "to put her characters to bed." She died in 1749, at an advanced age. She is supposed to have been the mother of the celebrated d'Alembert, who was born in 1717, and

his ingratitude, ineffectually endeavoured to obstruct his elevation. He once said to the duke, "I hear you intend to promote that rascal du Bois to the archbishopric of Cambray." "True," replied the duke, extremely embarrassed; "but his promotion will be serviceable to my affairs." In his interviews with madame Tencin, he also loaded him with the most sarcastic abuse, which the lady reporting, du Bois obtained the disgrace of Nocé, and Schaub, who espoused the quarrels of du Bois, took an active part in this transaction.

On the cardinal's death, the duke of Orleans instantly sent messenger after messenger to recal Nocé, contemptuously observing in his

placed as a foundling under the care of a glass-man, in the parish of La Ronde, in Paris, from whence he was called Jean de la Ronde, until he took the name of d'Alembert.

To her influence, her brother, Pierre Guerin de Tencin, principally owed his elevation. He entered early into the church, became prior of the Sorbonne, and grand vicar of Sens. He was in great friendship with Law, whose abjuration of the Protestant religion he received, and by his means he considerably improved his fortune, in a manner unfavourable to his reputation. At this period he was chargé d'affaires at Rome, and aspired to the highest ecclesiastical honours. He was appointed archbishop of Embrun in 1724, and in 1740 archbishop of Lyons. He was created cardinal in 1739, at the nomination of the pretender, minister of state in 1742, and aspired to be prime minister on the death of cardinal Fleury, but was disappointed in his expectations. He was a man of moderate abilities, and licentious morals; but of agreeable manners, and insinuating address. He died in 1758, aged 80.

letters, "Morta la bestia, morto il venino," and received him with embraces accompanied with tears. Mr. Walpole describes him as "a humourist, full of satire and contradiction, though with a great fund of wit, and apt to give things a malicious turn, if you approach him too near."

On his recal Nocé testified the most inveterate hatred and contempt of Sir Luke Schaub, and turned away with marks of disgust, whenever he attempted to address him. His aversion, however, to the British agent did not influence his political opinions; he was a staunch friend to the alliance between France and England, and warmly recommended the continuance of the connection.

His natural indolence and abhorrence of business induced superficial observers to suppose that he would be merely the social companion of the duke of Orleans, and not have the smallest influence in matters of state. But the sagacity of Mr. Walpole duly appreciated his character: "I have," he says, in a dispatch to lord Townshend, "the influence of count Nocé upon the regent's mind so much at heart, that while Schaub, and indeed others, think him of no great consequence, because he himself, nor the regent for him, seem to have any thoughts of his being put into business, I for that very reason believe he has the greatest credit with

his royal highness, as it is certain he has entirely his affection. For as Nocé is a bold open speaker, with a great deal of wit and good sense, but mixed with vanity, I know for certain that he values himself for not seeking to be a minister, and for having never made any great advantage from so great favour as he possesses in the regent's heart, which flatters his own vanity, and at the same time gives him great influence in what he says, as being disinterested, and solely attached to his master's good *." Accordingly Mr. Walpole courted Nocé with the most assiduous attention, and succeeded in conciliating his friendship, and securing the good-will of the duke of Orleans.

Mr. Walpole was greatly embarrassed in his new situation, by the secret opposition of Sir Luke Schaub, who was mortified that a person of his character and connections should be sent to Paris, and apprehensive of being superseded. With a view, therefore, to render his continuance at Paris necessary, Schaub availed himself of the private negotiation relative to the dukedom, and was supported by all the influence of his friend and protector lord Carteret, whose superior pre-eminence in the cabinet he blazoned to the French ministers, decried the interest of

* Mr. Walpole to lord Townshend, Paris, Oct. 21.—Nov. 1, 1723.

Townshend and Walpole, and represented them as adverse to the alliance with France.

With a view to defeat these manœuvres, Mr. Walpole obtained a private audience of the duke of Orleans; he stated the king's firm resolution to pursue such measures as would preserve the friendship and good understanding with his royal highness, and the sincere attachment of his relations to the same system. He likewise made a distinction between the principles of the Whigs and Tories, and discribed the former as friendly, and the latter as hostile, to the connection with France. This declaration made a deep impression on the mind of the duke of Orleans, and counteracted in an instant all the insinuations of Sir Luke Schaub.

In consequence of these contradictory opinions, and the mutual jealousy of both parties, they appeared like the ministers of two rival courts; and the letters of Mr. Walpole to his relations, and those of Sir Luke Schaub to lord Carteret, are filled with petulant remarks and vehement invectives, which it would be tedious and uninteresting to detail.

In the midst of these discordant intrigues, the duke of Orleans gave an instance of his superior esteem for Mr. Walpole, and of his conviction that his relations had the pre-eminence in the cabinet. By the express command of

the duke of Orleans, communicated through Count Nocé, Mr. Walpole had a confidential interview with his royal highness on the subject of the dukedom. After dining with count Morville, he was conducted by Nocé to a low and dark apartment in the palace of Versailles. Nocé retiring, on the entrance of the duke of Orleans, his royal highness opened the conference, by expressing his willingness to make any sacrifice, or undergo any hazard, to comply with the king's request. He then expatiated on the difficulties and obstacles* which resulted from the aversion of the nobility; he represented the family of la Vrilliere as having no pretensions to that honour; treated the whole business as an intrigue of Schaub, who had a love affair with madame de la Vrilliere, and had deceived the king by his misrepresentations. He

* A curious passage in the Memoirs of Villars will prove the embarrassments of the duke of Orleans.

"Le bruit se répandit alors que le duc d'Orléans voulut faire des ducs, et donner cet honneur au marquis de la Vrilliere, a fin que son fils épousât une fille bâtarde du roi d'Angleterre, sur cela je dis au duc d'Orleans; vos bons serviteurs ne peuvent s'empêcher de vous représenter que votre gloire est interessée à ne pas laisser dire que le roi d'Angleterre, n'osant pas donner so bâtarde à un milord, dont il y en a plus de deux cents, vous oblige, pour la marier, à faire un duc en France. Le régent m'avoua qu'on lui en avoit parlé, et que je lui faisois un plaisir très sensible de lui faire voir et sentir les consequences qu'aroit cette démarche." Memoirs de Villars, Tom. 3, p. 92.

declared therefore his resolution to delay presenting to the king of France, the letter from the king of England, requesting the grant of the dukedom which Sir Luke Schaub had delivered to him, until he had received further information from Hanover. He then concluded, "I must therefore request you instantly to send a courier to Hanover, with a letter for lord Townshend, to lay before his majesty the true and real state of the business; I wish to know the king's sentiments on the subject, and am ready to obey his majesty's commands, when I am convinced he is fully acquainted with the transaction."

An account of this interesting interview, which proved the full reliance of the duke of Orleans on Mr. Walpole's integrity and good sense, is detailed at length, in a dispatch to lord Townshend, dated on the first of December, to be laid before the king. It was accompanied with a private letter, in which Mr. Walpole exculpates himself from having purposely solicited this confidential communication with a view to obstruct the grant of the dukedom. He stated the delicacy of his situation, and his apprehensions of offending the king; yet expressed his full conviction, that the obstacles to the grant were insuperable, that Schaub had exceeded his powers, and by his indiscreet precipitancy in de-

livering the letter for the king of France, before he was secure of success, had committed the king's honour.

These dispatches had scarcely reached the place of their destination, before another arrived which announced a sudden and unexpected change in the court of France.

The duke of Orleans had been some time indisposed; but notwithstanding the repeated solicitations of his physicians, would neither abstain from pleasure or business. His surgeon observing his eyes inflamed, and his countenance bloated, predicted a fit of apoplexy, unless he would submit to be bled and physicked. The duke, smiling, replied, that vain apprehensions should not debar him from the enjoyments of life, and a sudden death was that of all others which he preferred. He accordingly continued his usual train of life, and did not relax his extreme application to business.

On the 2d of December, after dinner, in which he freely indulged himself, he transacted much business of State, until fatigued with his exertions, the importunities of visitors, and numerous applications, he retired to his cabinet, to repose himself until the hour in which he usually waited on the king. Among many persons who were refused admittance, was his principal favourite, at this period, the duchess of Phala-

ris, who came to present a memorial in favour of the duchess of Meilleray. The duke having soon afterwards enquired of his valet the names of the visitors, sent for the duchess of Phalaris, who had retired to the apartment of madame du Rohan; because, as he said, she would not fatigue him with her importunities, and perhaps had something of importance to communicate. On entering the room, she perceived that he was indisposed. While they were conversing on the subject of the memorial, and he was promising to grant her friend's request, he sunk into a kind of lethargy; but recovering made an apology for his inattention: he soon relapsed, and the duchess observing great difficulty of respiration, and an immediate change of countenance, his eyes open and his mouth distorted, rushed out of the cabinet, and shrieked violently for assistance. But after traversing various apartments in vain, she returned, and found the room full of people, and the duke extended on the floor, his head resting on the corner of the chair. He still breathed; but after several ineffectual attempts to restore him, expired within a few hours, in the 50th year of his age*.

* This account of the death of the duke of Orleans, is principally taken from Mr. Crawfurd's Dispatch to Lord Carteret, in Lord Hardwicke's State Papers, vol. 2, p. 625. Also from a letter of Sir Luke Schaub to Lord Carteret, Mr. Walpole's Dispatches, and Œuvres de St. Simon.

The sudden death of the duke of Orleans, and the doubtful prospect of the succeeding administration, filled the court and country with general consternation; the young king received the account of his demise with great marks of sensibility and affliction, and long regretted his memory. Mr. Walpole has paid him a just tribute of applause in the dispatch which announced his death. "This great and unexpected stroke does I find affect, in a most sensible manner, the persons of the best quality and sense here, as thinking the death of his royal highness at this juncture, considering him as to his high birth, and superior talents in government, not to be replaced; besides that he had, by his capacity, and indefatigable pains in business, overcome difficulties almost insurmountable, and given the nation a prospect of a lasting peace, which the best patriots here think absolutely necessary for France*."

* To lord Townshend, December 6th, 1723. Walpole Papers.

CHAPTER 5.

1723 — 1724.

The Duke of Bourbon becomes Prime Minister — His Character and Principles — Influence of Madame du Prié — General Account of the New Administration — Marshal de Villars — Paris du Verney and his three Brothers — Change in the Conduct of Louis the Fifteenth — Rise and Ascendancy of Fleury — Extracts from Mr. Walpole's Private Letters, relating to the State of the Court, and to the Motives of his own Conduct — First Conference with Fleury.

THE death of the duke of Orleans was scarcely announced, before the duke of Bourbon entered the closet, and found the king in tears, and the bishop of Frejus employed in consoling him. The duke requesting the office of prime minister, the king made no reply; but fixed his eyes on Fleury, who instantly nodding approbation, declared he would answer for the duke's loyalty and attachment, and that his majesty would consult his interest by appointing him first minister. He added, "M. de la Vrilliere is in the antichamber, and if your majesty is willing, I will call him to receive your orders to expedite the patent." The king said, "Yes:" La Vrilliere was admitted; the patent was signed; and a chair of state being introduced, his majesty

seated himself in it, and received the customary oaths from the duke of Bourbon.*

Soon after the departure of the duke of Bourbon, the young duke of Orleans entered the closet, and threw himself at the king's feet, who gently raised him from the ground; the duke burst into tears, and after exclaiming that he was too deeply affected with this melancholy catastrophe of his father's death to address his majesty, abruptly took his leave.

Louis Henri, duke of Bourbon and Enghien, of the branch of Condé, usually styled, during his administration, Monsieur le Duc, was in the thirty-second year of his age, when he succeeded the duke of Orleans in the office of prime minister. In his early youth he displayed great personal courage, but was a man of weak capacity and irresolute temper; and possessed all the vices, without the talents, of his predecessor. He was beset by projectors, encompassed by persons of indifferent reputation, and was so wholly governed by his mistress, that his administration was termed the administration of madame de Prie.

Agnes, daughter of Stephen de Berthelot, Baron de Baye, was born in 1698, and espoused, when very young, Louis marquis de Prie, embas-

* Mr. Walpole to lord Townshend, Dec. 6, 1723.

sador at the court of Turin*. She possessed great beauty of countenance, elegance of figure, fascinating manners, and, for her age and sex, no inconsiderable share of literary accomplishments; but she was dissolute, imperious, venal, profuse, and intriguing.

The principal ministers who directed affairs under du Bois, and the duke of Orleans, were retained by madame de Prie: Morville, Armenonville, la Vrilliere, Breteuil, and Dodun; most of whom being persons without influence, and of moderate talents, were wholly subservient to her will. To these ministers the duke of Bourbon joined the marshal de Villars †, whom he introduced into the counsel of State.

These were the ostensible ministers; but the real and efficient agents of this weak administration

* Desbois Dictionnaire de la Noblesse, art. Berthelot and Prié; tom. 2, p. 389, and tom. 11, p. 542.

† Louis Hector, marquis and duc de Villars, was born in 1653. Being destined to the profession of arms, he gave, at an early period of his life, numerous instances of extreme intrepidity, and raised himself to the highest military rank, in which he equally distinguished himself by his skill as a general. Towards the close of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, he revived the glory of the French arms, and, by his successful campaign in Flanders, and his negotiations at Rastadt, hastened the conclusion of the peace of Baden. His character is well and truly drawn by Voltaire,

"Heureux Villars, fanfaron, plein de coeur;"

for his vanity was equal to his success and intrepidity.

were four brothers of the name of Paris, whose rapid rise and singular adventures are recorded by Saint Simon. Their father kept a solitary inn at the foot of the Alps, in a narrow pass leading to Italy. His four sons, who followed the occupation of muleteers, were active, industrious and intelligent, and performed essential service by transporting provisions and forage across the mountains, to the army of the duke de Vendome in Italy, who, by the delay of his commissary, had been prevented from opening the campaign. The activity and zeal of the four brothers attracted notice; they were again employed, made great profits, and gradually became contractors themselves. After raising considerable fortunes they repaired to Paris, where their talents were rewarded, and they were employed in the department of the finances, under the duke of Noailles and Argenson.

During the regency, Law had great difficulty in suppressing their credit and influence; but on the overthrow of his system, to which they greatly contributed, they again rose into power. They principally directed the administration of the finances, under Pelletier de la Houssaie, who was made comptroller-general in 1720, and under Dodun, who succeeded him in 1722; they were often consulted by du Bois, and noticed by the duke of Orleans. Being protected

by madame de Prie, their authority was paramount during the administration of the duke of Bourbon. The eldest was distinguished by the name of Paris; the second was called la Montagne, from the sign of his father's inn; the third, Montmartel; and the fourth, Duverney, who had served as a common soldier, and was the most remarkable for his address and influence.

The commencement of the duke of Bourbon's administration was extremely embarrassed, by the opposition of the family of Orleans, and by the cabals of his mother, Louisa Frances, natural daughter of Louis the Fourteenth, whose high spirit could not brook subjection to a supercilious and domineering mistress. He was, as Mr. Walpole, in a letter to his brother, justly observes, "encompassed with a mother and a mistress, who had both their private views and interests; who heartily hated one another, but lived well enough in appearance; each apprehending who should get the better in case of a rupture, and both of them daily suggesting, by their creatures, some project that might flatter the duke's particular interests and ambition*." The evil effects of these cabals, and of the duke's incapacity, were counteracted by the situation and ascendancy of Fleury.

* Nov. 28, 1724.

Andrew Hercules de Fleury was son of a receiver of tythes in the diocese of Lodeve, in the province of Languedoc. He was born on the 22d of June 1653, and discovering early signs of quick comprehension, was sent to Paris, at the age of six, and prosecuted his studies with great assiduity and success, under the Jesuits, and in the school of Harcourt. He distinguished himself by his public dissertations in latin and greek, in which he explained, with considerable learning, the principal doctrines of the athenian philosophers. Being destined to the church, he obtained, in 1668, a canonry of Montpellier, by the recommendation of Pierre de Bonzi, bishop of Beziers, whose protection his father had acquired. This prelate, afterwards better known under the title of cardinal de Bonzi, archbishop of Narbonne, and grand almoner to the queen, was fascinated with the rising talents and insinuating address of young Fleury, introduced him at court, and procured for him the appointment of chaplain to the queen of Louis the Fourteenth, at the age of twenty. On the death of the queen, he was nominated, by the same interest, chaplain to the king. Under the auspices of his powerful protector, he was introduced to the first societies of Paris, and increased the favourable impression of a pleasing figure and fascinating countenance, by the

amenity of his manners, the charms of his conversation, and the discretion of his conduct.

These amiable qualities, which acquired him many friends, among the first persons of the realm, for some time retarded his promotion. Louis the Fourteenth was displeased with his courtly manners and general acquaintance, which appeared to him marks of dissipation, and in reply to the numerous applications for a bishopric, said, "Fleury has too many friends, and is too much a man of the world to fulfil the duties of an episcopal station."

Fleury submitted patiently to these disappointments, and was at length, by the importunity of the archbishop of Paris, promoted to the see of Frejus, in Provence *. Retiring to his bishopric he performed his professional duties with extreme regularity, tempered the dignity of his high office with his characteristic suavity of disposition, liquidated, by the strictest œconomy, the debts which his predecessors had entailed upon the diocese, and rendered himself equally beloved and respected.

He performed the most essential service to the town and district of Frejus, when Victor Amadeus, duke of Savoy, and prince Eugene, led a considerable army against Toulon. The inhabitants of Frejus, alarmed at the approach

* In 1698.

of the enemy, were preparing to retire, but were prevented by the bishop, whose interposition with the duke of Savoy saved the town from pillage on the payment of a moderate contribution.

During three days, which the duke and prince Eugene passed in the episcopal palace, they distinguished the bishop with uncommon marks of attention; and Victor Amadeus was so much delighted with his conversation and manners, that he pressed him to accept the office of governor to his son, afterwards Charles Emanuel the First, an honour which the bishop declined; but he offended Louis the Fourteenth by performing Te Deum in the cathedral of Frejus, and publicly offering the holy water to the duke of Savoy, which was maliciously represented as an act of rejoicing for the success of his arms; circumstances which added obstacles to his further promotion.

During his residence in his bishopric he collected various memorials relating to the revenue, and the improvement of several branches of commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, which increased his political knowledge. He did not totally bury himself in his diocese; but made occasional excursions, appeared at court, and in the capital, and kept alive his antient connexions, particularly with the families of

Noailles and Villeroy, to whom he principally owed his subsequent elevation.

Louis the Fourteenth having, at the instigation of madame de Maintenon, made by will an act of settlement for the government of the kingdom, during the minority of his grandson, which divided the administration, and the care of the young king's person, between the dukes of Orleans and Maine, under the controul of a council of regency, appointed marshal Villeroy governor; but was embarrassed in the choice of a preceptor, who was capable of that important trust, and calculated to conciliate the different parties. After much hesitation and difficulty, he was induced, by the importunity of marshal Villeroy, to nominate Fleury, who, aware of this arrangement, had recently resigned the bishopric of Frejus for the abbey of Tournus.

Although the duke of Orleans, on the death of Louis the Fourteenth, annulled the will of the monarch, and assumed the sole regency; yet he confirmed the appointment of the governor and preceptor. During the turbulent and intriguing period of the regency, Fleury conducted himself with such circumspection as to give no umbrage to the duke of Orleans or the cardinal du Bois; he entered into no cabals, he made no applications, either for himself or his friends; but seemed wholly attentive to fulfil the duties

of his trust, and gradually gained an uncommon influence over the mind of his royal pupil. In the course of his employment, he omitted no opportunity of obtaining information on the domestic and foreign affairs of France, thus qualifying himself for the station which he afterwards attained.

The disgrace of his patron, marshal Villeroy, which seemed likely to involve him in the same catastrophe, contributed to strengthen his influence, and perpetuate his power. Informed of Villeroy's arrest, he precipitately quitted the court, and retired to Baville, a seat belonging to his friend de Lamoignon. The young king, deeply afflicted with the loss of his governor and preceptor, refused all sustenance, took no rest, and endangered his life by the excess of his grief. In this alarming situation, the retreat of Fleury being either purposely or accidentally discovered, a letter from the king, affectionately urging his return, and another from the regent, in terms no less flattering, after some affected delays, drew him to Versailles, where his presence instantly restored the king to health and tranquillity. He resumed his office, under the duke of Charost, the new governor: and though he suffered the imputation of ingratitude for deserting his former benefactor; yet he secretly exulted in the removal of an imperious master,

and anticipated the most glorious prospects of future elevation.

Soon after this event, Fleury gave a proof of great disinterestedness, or still greater ambition, by declining the archbishopric of Rheims, the first station in the kingdom, except that of a prince of the blood; declaring to the regent, who pressed him to accept it, that he preferred his station about the king's person, and in the council, to all the dignities upon earth. It is likewise a striking proof, either of his prudence or his integrity, that he did not supplant the duke of Orleans, and accept the office of prime minister, offered him by the king, on the death of cardinal du Bois. He seems to have stood in awe of the regent; and even before the disgrace of his patron Villeroy, he seldom ventured, and not without great apparent diffidence, to be present in the cabinet, when the duke of Orleans transacted business with the king *, and concealed his views under an air of candour and simplicity.

Hitherto Fleury, adhering to his unobtrusive manner, had kept in the back ground; but he now became a prominent figure in the French administration. His abilities, however, were at

* A la fin de ce travail où le marechal de Villars assistoit toujours, et où quelquefois l'ancien evêque de Frejus se hazardoit de rester, &c. St. Simon, t. 9, p. 96.

this period so little appreciated, that he was merely considered as a learned bigot, wholly ignorant of foreign politics. Even Mr. Walpole, notwithstanding his discernment of character, did not at first sufficiently appreciate the independence and spirit of Fleury. Although he mentions him in his first dispatch to lord Townshend* as a man of great learning, abilities, and credit with the king; yet he also considered him as a creature and spy of the duke of Orleans.

Such being the state of the French court, and of the principal characters who composed or influenced the administration, the situation of Mr. Walpole called forth all his sagacity and discretion. He was embarrassed with the long-pending affair of the dukedom, he was thwarted by Sir Luke Schaub, he was without a permanent official character, and uncertain, at this crisis, by whom the duke of Bourbon would be governed, or by whom the helm of State would be directed. He was urged by Schaub to pay instant court to madame de Prie; he was importuned by Bolingbroke to employ his agency with the duke of Bourbon; but he prudently kept aloof from the petty cabals of women and courtiers, and waited till the struggle of the contending parties was decided. He did not,

* Paris, November 1, 1723. Walpole Papers.

however, neglect his duty ; he obtained, in an interview with the duke of Bourbon, the strongest assurances, that the death of the duke of Orleans would make no change in the measures hitherto pursued to preserve the union between the two nations, and formed a plan for his future conduct, to gain the party who should acquire the ascendancy. A few extracts from his interesting letters to his brother and lord Townshend will shew the uncertain state of the French court, and the motives by which his conduct was regulated.

" The particular audience that Mr. Crawfurd* and I had, last night, at Versailles, of the duke of Bourbon, which gave me some, and indeed would have given me a great deal of satisfaction, had his highness in any respect an authority, credit, or capacity equal to his predecessor, or to his own inclinations; though I think we have not at present any thing to fear, and we must be looking to see what pilot, what hands, and what materials this new and unexperienced admiral will make use of to steer under him in a season and a sea so doubtful. In the mean time I will venture, by way of speculation with you, to state the difference of the late and pre-

*, Mr. Crawfurd was secretary to the embassy, and chargè d'affaires.

sent situation of persons and times, and to leave the ecclaircissement of them to future events.

" The duke of Orleans had an authority by his birth, as presumptive heir to the crown, which the duke of Bourbon not only wants, but has a dangerous rival to his administration, in the person that has an unquestionable title before him. The duke of Orleans by virtue of that right, and his own great address, had guarded all the avenues to the king, and not only kept every body in awe, and at a distance from his majesty, but had indeed made himself of late more agreeable to him than any body else. The duke of Bourbon, I am afraid, wants not only that foundation of right, but also the talents necessary to establish himself in that manner, and must expect that others will approach his majesty, and perhaps influence him too on certain occasions. His royal highness, by a great genius, and long experience in affairs, had got the better of all cabals and parties against him, and his right of succession to the crown, and had settled his own interest on so strong and extensive a bottom, that not only the tranquillity of Europe, but the interest and repose of France itself, depended upon it; and even those that had been his enemies had laid aside their principles to become courtiers to him, which made him every day grow more

popular of late, and is now generally lamented. Even the marshal d'Huxelles, who hated him most, has been heard to say since his death, that it is a pity so great a coquin should be so great a loss.

"The duke of Bourbon, as it is visibly his interest and his inclination to follow the same plan, has certainly steadiness and resolution enough, in particular points, when he has once taken his *plie*; but as he has always been encompassed with projectors, he may possibly fall into hands and measures, that may make him uneasy in his management of civil affairs, and the same want of discernment, as to persons and things, may, by degrees, unwarily lead him into steps relating to foreign affairs, inconsistent with the present system, and his own interests.

"Madame de Prie has certainly a vast ascendant over him, and as she is a lady of an intriguing and craving temper, money will be her principal view; it is therefore thought, that the Paris's will be able to gain her, and will be consequently the duke's chief directors, as to the finances, which may indeed exclude M. le Blanc and Mr. Law, for whom his highness has certainly some inclination. * * * * * *

"Morville is thought to be at present well with the duke of Bourbon, on account of

foreign affairs; and should he gain credit enough to make his opinion prevalent, and of weight with his highness, it would be of good consequence; but as preceptor Frejus is said to have in a manner recommended the duke to his majesty to be prime minister, and is thought to be underhand in an alliance with Villars, those two, who were all complaisance and submission to the duke of Orleans, may now think of acting upon their own views and principles; it being almost as necessary for the duke to court them, as for them to court the duke.

"Frejus is not very able, I am told, as to foreign affairs; but a mighty bigot: insomuch that the French themselves think him too great a papist. I have learnt this day a particular instance of it, and of his being no great friend to England. The night before I was to deliver my credential letter to his majesty, l'abbé Alaric, sub-preceptor to the king, was in company with Mr. Crawfurd and me, and the next morning, being at his usual hour with his majesty, he talked to the king of my being to wait upon him that day, and of both of us in so kind a way as to please his majesty, which Mr. Frejus taking notice of, stepped up, and said, *But these are enemies, Sire, to our holy religion.*

"The natural disposition and view of marshal Villars is known to all the world; war and

glory are what he desires, and especially to retrieve and revenge the honour of France; and should bigotry and glory prevail in French councils, the old maxims will soon revive; but it is to be hoped, and I verily believe that apprehensions of this nature are at a distance, and before it must come to this, Torcy must be recalled, who will not be contented to act barely as a commis; and should there ever be any good foundation for suspecting his return to business, in that case, perhaps, his majesty will think it necessary to give the duke of Bourbon notice, in a proper time and manner, of the distrusts and jealousy it must needs create in the mind of his majesty and his good subjects, in order to hinder in time his highness from taking so dangerous a step. * * * * *

"From these particulars it is not unlikely but that in some time great cabals, divisions, and parties, will be formed in this court, from whence we may at least have this comfort, that it will more than ever be not only the duke of Bourbon's, but the interest of the other princes, rather to make their court to, than to quarrel with his majesty; and it is the general opinion here, that M. le Duc has shewn this particular mark of friendship to the marshal de Villars, in order to strengthen himself at home, without any regard to things abroad. * * * *

"The duke of Chartres *, besides his grief for the loss of his father, is certainly affected at heart for that of his right, as he thinks it, to be a prime minister (being one of the council, and in the one and twentieth year of his age,) and to such a degree as not to be able to disguise it. * * * * * *

"Things standing thus, we must wait to see what may be the consequence of the stubborn coolness and indeed aversion of the duke of Chartres to the duke of Bourbon, and to what a degree he will push it. The duke of Chartres's best friends, I am told, blame his conduct, especially as it arises in opposition to the other's being prime minister, which being an immediate act of the king himself, approved and submitted to by the whole nation, will put him not only in the wrong in the eye of the world, but be made use of to his disadvantage with the young king; but it is said that his mother, the duchess of Orleans, is inexorable against the duke of Bourbon, and animates her son in this state of enmity and defiance. Should this fatal division continue, and consequently by degrees increase, the danger we have to apprehend seems to be, lest one of those, without considering his real interest, in regard to the succession of the crown, should, for his imme-

* The duke of Orleans by the death of his father.

diate support, fling himself into the councils and power of the king of Spain, and that the emperor may, if he sees a prospect of civil disorders in France, make his advantage of them, and think of measures that may hazard the tranquillity of Europe. But it is to be hoped, that such apprehensions are so far out of sight at present, as not to prevent the conclusion of what has been so long depending at Cambray. Whether that congress may not suffer some delays, depends entirely upon the behaviour of the courts of Spain and Vienna, when they shall have known the duke of Orleans's death, and the state of affairs here.

" As to the duke of Bourbon's own conduct in his administration, and who is like to have the greatest influence upon it, you may conclude from what I have already said, that as things now stand, he seems determined to make use of the hands, and follow the steps of the duke of Orleans, relating to foreign affairs.

" But for having the chief confidence and power with him, in regard to the management of civil matters, there are great cabals and intrigues, the chief of which seems to be between madame de Prie, the duke's mistress, and the duchess of Bourbon, his mother. Their views both tend immediately to their particular profit, and his majesty's ministers should

be cautious here, as yet, in their application to either, for fear of not only giving jealousy to the other, but even to the duke of Bourbon himself, as if he was to be influenced by ladies in his administration. Should madame de Prie prevail, Crawfurd has the means of a very good access to her; should the duchess prevail, Lassay, who is, and has been for some time her gallant, may have a good deal so say, and must be managed. He has been a handsome agreeable person, but has no great knowledge of business, besides that of projects and stockjobbing, which made him intimate with Mr. Law, and endeavour, not long before the duke of Orleans's death, to do him service, even to have him sent for back. But Lassay's reputation is none of the best; his father has a good character, had great credit in Louis the Fourteenth's time, and is of the stamp and principles of the old court, having been some years an humble servant to madame de Bon, Torcy's sister."

During this state of suspense, Mr. Walpole first adopted that line of conduct which afterwards gave success to his negotiations, and contributed to secure the friendship of France during a period of unexampled difficulty. Though still misinformed of the real views and character of Fleury, he was aware of his growing credit and influence with the king. He there-

fore opened a personal communication with the venerable preceptor, and obtained an interview, of which he gives an account in a letter to his brother, dated December 15th, 1723, N. S.

" The constant and assiduous attendance of bishop Frejus upon the young king, as counsellor as well as preceptor, makes it difficult to see him, unless by a particular appointment, which, however desirous I might be, I would not officiously affect to do, after the full assurance I had received already of the duke of Bourbon's good intentions, as well from himself as from other ministers and particular friends. But Mr. Crawfurd and I being at Versailles on Monday morning, whither we went upon an invitation of the marshal de Villars to dine with him there that day, we did, upon an intimation of abbé Alaric, sub-preceptor to the king, of the bishop's being at his lodgings, wait upon him, and as soon as we came in, he discharged those that were about him, and ordered to be denied: after the first compliments between us were over, and he had expressed himself with a respect due to the king our master, and regard to the administration and happy state of affairs, we found an opportunity to mention the present state of affairs here; upon which he immediately gave us, in the readiest and roundest manner, the strongest assurances of the fixt resolution of

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his most christian majesty and his council, to persevere in the same system, the same measures, and in the same good understanding with the king our master, relating to foreign affairs, as had been pursued and brought so near to a happy conclusion by the late duke of Orleans; and he declared upon the word and faith of a bishop, there was not the least doubt, nor the shadow of any thoughts to the contrary. That as for his own part we might depend upon his being entirely of the same opinion with Mr. le Duc and Mr. de Morville in what they had assured us on this subject, and added that as a counsellor to the most christain king, the interest, welfare, and peace of his majesty's kingdoms should have the first and uppermost place in his thoughts, and when they came under consideration, he should always, in giving this advice, however attached he may be to his own religion, divest himself of his cross and ecclesiastical function. He expressed himself on this occasion with so much frankness, candour, and simplicity, that truth and sincerity seemed to accompany his words, and he appeared to us in the state, he said, he should always be when consulted by his majesty upon foreign affairs.

"He seemed not to doubt of things going well; that this sudden stroke of the duke of Orleans's death might at first occasion an alarm

and ferment in all Europe; he hoped it would subside again, and things go on in their former channel, and that we should see this great work of the quadruple alliance brought to a final conclusion, by finishing the congress, in a manner, as soon as it was opened.

"We were not wanting, you may be assured, to express our great satisfaction and acknowledgements to the bishop for having done us the honour to declare his sentiments so much for the advantage of the two nations, and for the public tranquillity of Europe, in so open and obliging a manner; and that we did not doubt but his personal credit with his most christian majesty, as well as great influence he must needs have in his counsels, would be of singular service and weight for the good purposes he had mentioned, and particularly for improving the union and confidence between the two nations: as his majesty had already given sufficient proofs of having that in view, and at heart, more than any other consideration, we might venture to assure him before hand, that he would continue in the same sentiments notwithstanding the late alteration. The bishop answered, that he was fully persuaded of what we said, but could not forbear observing, at the same time, that there was a party in England extremely affected to the emperor. We answered, that we had been the

emperor's friends for a great many years, for the good of our own country, and for preserving the balance of Europe; and that we were willing to live well with him still, but by no means to such a degree as to give into any views that might disturb the present peace, and lead us into war *de gaieté de cœur;* that upon the same principles, and for the same reasons, we now desire to live in confidence with France; that for his majesty's part he had no pretensions, no differences to adjust with any prince whatsoever, nothing to desire but the peace of his own subjects, and the tranquillity of the rest of Europe.

"Upon the whole, I think, considering the bishop's character, and the manner of his conversation with us, we have no reason to suspect but that he spoke his own real sentiments, as well as the duke of Bourbon's and Morville's, in regard to the measures to be pursued here, at least at this present juncture; and I having since seen the Dutch embassador, he confirmed me in this opinion, by letting me know that Frejus had upon the same subject spoke his mind so fully and so openly to him, that he must be the most avowed rogue in the world if he designed to deceive him, and he has not, to do him justice, that reputation."

This conference removed the prejudices

which Mr. Walpole had entertained of the opinions and character of Fleury, and laid the foundation of that intimate union which was established between two persons whose manners and deportment were opposite; but whose views and principles tended solely to promote the honour and advantage of their respective countries, and to preserve the peace of Europe. And so convinced was Mr. Walpole of the bishop's candour and integrity, that, in a letter of December 22, after expatiating on the dangers which might arise from the enmity between the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, he adds, "Nothing can be more desirable than a reconciliation between these two great personages, both for their own sakes, and for the sake of the public peace. In the mean while, I flatter myself that old Frejus has got so much possession of the king's ear and mind, as to be able to fix him to the present administration, and to prepossess him against any insinuation to the contrary."

CHAPTER 6.

1724—1725.

Situation and Views of Lord Bolingbroke — Mr. Walpole declines his Intervention with the Duke of Bourbon — Extracts from his Letters, relating to various Conversations with Bolingbroke, on the State of Affairs in the French Court, and on his Exile—His complete Restoration prevented by Sir Robert Walpole.

IN no instance, perhaps, did Mr. Walpole display greater sagacity and discretion, than in his behaviour to lord Bolingbroke, who now resided at Paris, and, since his dismission from the pretender's service, had opened a clandestine correspondence with the British ministers, and essentially contributed to injure the cause of the Jacobites.

In consequence of his services, he had received from Sunderland and Stanhope, promises of restoration to his estates and honours, the fulfilment of which, on their deaths, he claimed from Townshend and Walpole, and his solicitations were countenanced by the influence of the duchess of Kendal, and of his friend lord Harcourt, who had recently made his peace with the ministry. His marriage with madame de Villette, niece of madame de Maintenon, having facilitated his intercourse with the

French court, his interposition was considered as highly important; in May 1723 his pardon passed the great seal, and he was enabled to return to England, but without the restoration of his estate and peerage.

After passing some months in England, where he paid the most abject court to Townshend and Walpole, with the hopes of obtaining a full restoration to his estates and honours, he returned to Paris. On the death of the duke of Orleans, the British ministers, eager to avail themselves of his intimacy with the duke of Bourbon, instructed Mr. Walpole to employ his intervention in promoting the continuance of the union between the two courts. Bolingbroke, eager to extort his restitution, by becoming the principal channel of communication, importuned Mr. Walpole with his offers to negotiate directly with the duke of Bourbon, and particularly to employ his influence in the affair of the dukedom. In the course of his conferences, he continually reverted to the uneasiness and uncertainty of his situation, and expressed his hopes of restoration; he affected to renounce his connection with the Tories, professed his inviolable attachment to the Whigs, and declared his fixed resolution to act in subservience to those who restored him to his country.

Mr. Walpole, aware of his object, and conscious of the danger of entrusting the affairs of England to a person of his versatile and ambitious character, declined his overtures, by representing the difficulty of carrying the reversal of his attainder through parliament, notwithstanding the support of the ministers. Lord Bolingbroke appeared to yield to these reasons; but expressed his wish, that the ministers might so far obtain the reversal of his attainder, as to enable him to inherit his paternal estate, which Mr. Walpole agreed to represent to his brother.

Two letters from Mr. Walpole to his brother will display his extreme caution, and shew the address by which he succeeded in declining the mediation of Bolingbroke, and in transacting the business directly with the duke of Bourbon himself.

"Paris, Dec. 15, 1723. Tom Roberts brought me your letter of the 29th instant, which I own did not so much surprise (Brinsden being the forerunner of it) as it did concern me, finding myself once more upon a precipice, to avoid the danger of which greater discretion and abilities than I am master of are certainly required. As you prudently avoided writing to lord Bolingbroke, had you likewise endeavoured to gain time, until you had heard from me, relating to

the situation of affairs, I should have escaped easily the great difficulties which I now apprehend, and made a good use of my lord Bolingbroke's information, without having given him any handle to be the negotiator of his majesty's affairs, and by degrees endeavour to make himself the necessary instrument between the two courts; the consequences of which are too obvious, on many accounts, to your understanding, to make it needless for me to mention. For I have seen him since the death of the duke of Orleans several times, received several lights from him, have been very open and friendly in my conversation with him; but as he never offered, so I never intended to desire him to take a part in doing his majesty service with the duke of Bourbon, as being by no means wanted, and, as I hinted before, leading to great inconveniences.

"But Brinsden is come with a letter from lord Harcourt; Tom Roberts is likewise arrived with a letter from you, to back, as lord Bolingbroke must naturally think, what the other has wrote and recommended; and as the devil would have it, his lordship and Tom entered my room at the same instant, and I having perused your letter before him, let him know that it referred to something that lord Harcourt had wrote to his lordship by,

Brinsden. Lord Bolingbroke immediately read to me, aloud, (Crawfurd being by,) that part of lord Harcourt's letter relating to the great services he, Bolingbroke, was thought to be capable of doing at this juncture, by his acquaintance and intimacy with the duke of Bourbon, and with a seeming modesty, and a good deal of art, said that it was some time since he had been intimate with his highness; however he would go immediately to Versailles, and wait upon him, and see what is to be done: then in the sequel of this discourse began to chalk out ways and schemes by which he could become acquainted with madame de Prie, or others that might stand fairest in the duke of Bourbon's favour, and by that means endeavour to be useful to his majesty, if it was thought proper; and he seemed to appear rather indifferent than over fond of such a commission, taking it for granted, at the same time, as if this had been an application to him. But I confess this was the first time I have seen, since I have been here, any real satisfaction or pleasure in his countenance. After a short conversation, in which I had no great share, he desired me to dine with him to-morrow, which I did not decline, for fear of making him suspect a coolness in me on the subject of your letter. But I shall, in the best manner, decline any further offices from him after

this visit of his to the duke of Bourbon. I have fully apprised Mr. Crawfurd, who is his friend, and wishes him well, of what consequence it may be to let lord Bolingbroke into the management of his majesty's affairs here, and he seems very sensible of it. And now fortune and my stars direct and protect me, once more, in this critical juncture! and if ever I become an itinerant minister again, I know whose fault it is."

"December 16. Yesterday, as I have hinted to you already, I went to dine with my lord Bolingbroke, and before we sat down to table, he took Mr. Crawfurd and me aside, to acquaint us with the conversation he had with the duke of Bourbon, at Versailles, in which his highness having expressed his resolution of living with the same confidence and union with his majesty, and upon the same foot of friendship with him as the duke of Orleans had done, he took an occasion to ask his lordship, whether he had seen the king's ministers here, and hoped they were well satisfied with him. His lordship replied, he had seen Mr. Walpole and Mr. Crawfurd, who had declared themselves extremely pleased with the assurances his highness had given them. Upon mentioning my name, his highness said, his brother in England was one of great capacity, in conducting well the home affairs there; but had little or no concern or in-

fluence in what was to be transacted in foreign courts. His lordship, on this occasion, did you justice in all respects, and gave his highness to understand, that whoever was looked upon to be so considerable as you are in the administration, did not fail to have his weight in council, upon foreign as well as domestic affairs, though it was not the immediate business of his own department. His highness answered, he was informed, that lord Carteret was the person who had the chief and only care and direction of the things abroad; his lordship replied, that lord Townshend had immediately by his station an equal concern in the management of them.

" The duke of Bourbon, after this discourse was over, took an occasion to mention to lord Bolingbroke M. de la Vrilliere's affair of the dukedom, as what Schaub had been very solicitous with him to have immediately done, as what his majesty would certainly expect, on account of the letters he had wrote, and were delivered to the duke of Orleans, before his death, and had since, though unopened, fallen into his highness's hands, who is prime minister. The duke spoke of Schaub with a good deal of contempt, but talked of this affair in such a manner, as though desirous, on one side, to know his majesty's real sentiments, yet more uneasy, on the other, lest too great a delay should look as if

he neglected to do in a handsome manner what his majesty might perhaps have much at heart. I think it is plain, from lord Bolingbroke's discourse, that the duke of Bourbon would do it with pleasure, if he thought it would oblige the king. From what the duke of Bourbon said, in relation to the ministers in England, it is plain that Sir Luke Schaub, by himself, or his friends, is endeavouring, by insinuations, to make impressions and distinctions of his majesty's ministers, in favour of such only as he looks upon as his chief patrons and supporters; and whether he does this with a view to his majesty's service, or his own in particular, I leave you to judge.

"But to return to lord Bolingbroke. After he had finished his account of his discourse with the duke of Bourbon, he said that he had made this step at the desire of our friends in England; but that he had two reasons why he thought it not proper to engage himself too far, and be very busy in our concerns here. The first, as what perhaps might be of no great use to his majesty at present; the second, on account of his situation, being in a constant uneasiness and suspense, about what may be or may not be done for him in England, and where, how, and with whom he is to pass the rest of his days.

"I laid hold of what he said to let him know

I thought he talked extremely right, and that it would be unreasonable to expect that he should exert himself here, for the service of England, without knowing what he might depend upon from thence, which I said it was impossible for me to tell him at present. He seemed well enough satisfied at what I had said; but yet I must observe to you, in confidence, that I believe, by his countenance and manner of speaking, he was in hopes of greater encouragement, and exhortations from me to engage him in our service, than I would venture to give him; and hinted as if time and circumstances might offer an opportunity of being useful. But I let this matter rest there, and I hope there will be no occasion to renew it again, it being my opinion that this court seems entirely disposed to live well with his majesty, and I don't doubt but they themselves think his majesty's friendship as necessary to them as theirs can be to his majesty, at least as things stand now. The insinuations, therefore, that may be made to you, by the friends of Mr. Law, or even of my lord Bolingbroke, of their being capable to be useful to us at this time here, is no otherwise so, than as we think fit to make it to ourselves. And I don't see that it can be in their power to do us any harm, unless we officiously put it into their power to do us

good; not but that we should continue to shew them all outward civilities and regard, they being already upon that foot with us."

"Paris, December 29, 1723, N. S.* As I intimated to you in my last, lord Bolingbroke, after he had told me he expected to be sent for by the duke of Bourbon in two or three days, went the day after that discourse to Versailles, and being returned, he made me a visit on Sunday evening, and told me that he had seen his highness, who, after having talked with him, in great confidence, of some disputes and difficulties about his particular affairs at court, &c. he opened his mind to him upon that of the dukedom demanded for M. de la Vrilliere, and expressed himself extremely embarrassed with a thing of this nature in the beginning of his administration, by which he found himself either under a necessity of disobliging his majesty, to whom he would gladly give the most early proofs of his zeal for his service, or else of pushing an affair which might be difficult for him to obtain, and be attended with great inconveniences in regard to the nobility of France. The young king had been already prepossessed, and spoke against it; Frejus opposed it, and had treated M. de la Vrilliere with a great deal of freedom

* Orford Papers.

upon it; all the men of quality, as it came in their way, shewed their aversion to it, with much more to the same purpose relating to the nature of the thing, as what the duke of Orleans had represented to me on that subject, adding some severe expressions about the impertinence of Sir Luke Schaub in never letting him alone upon it.

"Lord Bolingbroke asked his highness, why he did not speak to me, whom he was pleased to represent as a person more proper to be talked to upon a thing of such nicety and consequence, and might be better able to inform his highness of his majesty's real sentiments, and to make him more easy under these difficulties? His highness paused some time, and said, No; he would not speak to me, lest such a conversation should draw upon him a new letter from his majesty, which might lay him under a stronger obligation to execute the thing, before he knew whether he was able to do it, than he was at present, in the way it had come to his hands. But after some discourse he gave his lordship authority to sound me, as from himself, whether his highness could talk to me on this subject without any such risk, and let him know my answer.

"Lord Bolingbroke having finished his relation, immediately with great vivacity and pleasure told me I never could have such a glorious opportunity to lay a foundation of merit and

confidence with his highness, to shew how his majesty has been imposed upon and deceived by Schaub, and to destroy the credit of lord Carteret, who must have been at the bottom of this whole matter.

"This encouraging discourse of his lordship, joined with the general precaution I had framed to myself not to be led into any matter of moment and confidence under his lordship's management and conduct, gave me time to recollect, and to let his lordship know, that I was extremely obliged to him for his good intentions to put me into a way of credit and esteem with his highness; but I was afraid the opportunity he proposed was of too nice a nature for me to make use of for that purpose: I was not entirely convinced that Schaub had deceived his majesty as to M. le Duc's own disposition to the dukedom for la Vrilliere; because by the account his lordship had given of his former conversation with his highness on that subject, as well as what I had heard from others, had made me believe that M. le Duc himself had been favourably inclined towards it. I took the case to be, that the ladies had engaged him, before the late duke of Orleans's death, to give his consent, at least acquiescence to it, when it should be proposed in council, and afterwards, at his first coming to the administration of affairs, they may

likewise have touched him in a lucky moment, and obtained a renewal of his former assurances; but his highness having since taken the affair as prime minister into his serious consideration, and consulted with others, as well particular friends, as persons that must be concerned in doing it, finds the advice and disposition of every body against it, and himself entangled with inextricable difficulties, which made me apprehensive that the most cautious conversation of mine with his highness on so delicate a point, in the negotiation of which I had had no share or concern, might be turned afterwards to my disadvantage in case the thing did not succeed. But I was on the other hand extremely concerned lest M. le Duc should take ill my declining to see him on the foot and in the manner desired; for, although his lordship was to speak to me as from himself, yet as it arose from a conversation that he had with his highness, and his lordship was to carry an answer back to him as to my disposition, in this case I was afraid that the difference between a message directly from the duke, and what his lordship said to me, was so small, that his lordship's report of my conduct might make an impression to my prejudice in his highness's mind, which was a thought extremely grievous to me, especially at this juncture; but I could not tell how to avoid

it, but by leaving it to his lordship's management to give it the most favourable turn he could.

"I perceived his lordship extremely uneasy at this discourse, and with the air of a person the most disconcerted and disappointed I ever saw: he told me that he had no other view in this affair but my particular service and that of my friends, and, after strong professions (for which I gave him no occasion) to that purpose, and of his being himself very indifferent in the matter, said he wished he had not embarked so far in this affair, and since I looked upon it in the light I did in relation to M. le Duc, he must beg on his part not to be involved in the fault should the thing take a wrong turn at last. That Sir Luke Schaub, as he was certainly informed, had said, that he (lord Bolingbroke), by my instigation, had spoiled this affair in the duke of Orleans's time; and that therefore he hoped I would do him justice, if there was occasion, with you, as to his having never had any concern in it, but what had accidentally fallen to his lot lately in the manner I knew.

"I told his lordship that he need not be under the least uneasiness on that account; Schaub's malicious insinuations against his lordship, myself, Mr. Crawfurd, and others, on this occasion, would, I was persuaded, have no weight with

his majesty, or his ministers in England; and he might depend upon my representing this matter in such a light as to prevent any prejudice against him. His lordship concluded with telling me he would let his highness know, that he found me so close and uneasy in talking to me on this subject, that he did not think proper to push me to speak out; and he would do it in such a manner that M. le Duc should have no reason to be disobliged, and to take it ill of me.

"It is possible that in reading what goes before, you may at first view think I was too nice and refined in declining the opportunity flung in my way to know M. le Duc's sentiments, and perhaps of establishing a confidence and merit with him. But when I foresaw it must have been done under the protection in a manner of my lord Bolingbroke, who, by his own address without my seeking, had got so far into this business, and must in this way have been master of the whole secret and of my sentiments about Schaub and somebody else*, (who, I think, have most grossly deceived his majesty in this whole transaction,) as also have had the whole credit to himself with his highness, and turned the matter as he should find occasion to his own service and advantage, and perhaps laid a foun-

* Lord Carteret.

dation with M. le Duc for being the canal through which the English affairs of confidence might pass for the future: these reflections made me avoid his lordship's proposition, by convincing him (with a great many acknowledgments for his kindness to me) that I was afraid to embark and hazard myself in a transaction of this nature, which had been under the sole care and management of another, without any concern on my side, besides that of declaring myself for it as occasion required; and I am persuaded his lordship, by my behaviour, went away satisfied of this being my only view.

"In the mean time I had resolved with myself, as being sufficiently authorised by lord Townshend's letter to me of the 9th December, to make the best advantage I could, for his majesty's service, of this hint from lord Bolingbroke, without his knowledge or intervention. I went the next day to Versailles, and having, by the means of the marquis de Livry, obtained a private and secret audience of M. le Duc, I begged his pardon for troubling him in a manner and at a time so unseasonable; but hearing that his highness was much embarrassed about the affair of the dukedom for M. de la Vrilliere, if he would be pleased to let me know his sentiments and intentions upon it, I would venture and was able to give him a true state of his ma-

jesty's part and concern in it. He immediately said he would do all he could in it. I answered, that I was glad of it, but that I was obliged to tell him that this affair did not arise originally from his majesty's application and request, and it was never in his majesty's intention in the least to have it mixed and entangled with business of a public nature. At which he seemed a good deal surprised, and asked me how that matter stood? I then began to lay open the whole affair, by communicating to him what had passed between the late duke of Orleans and me upon it, of which I find he had already got some account, (and I don't wonder at it, because the present duke of Orleans has certainly declared he knew that his father would never have done it, and had let his majesty know how much they had both been imposed upon.) But, says his highness, what answer have you to this from the king? I then imparted to him what lord Townshend wrote to me in his letter of 28th November, recapitulating all the several steps and proceedings in it, and during the whole time M. le Duc seemed extremely astonished at the conduct of Sir Luke Schaub and the French ministers in a thing of this nature. I then intimated to his highness, that I had in some measure exceeded my orders, in going so far without his having spoke to me first upon it: he

asked me whether I had not had a hint of it from somebody else? I told him then what had passed between lord Bolingbroke and me, and how I had declined to give into the proposition coming from his lordship, letting his highness know that I and all my family had a personal regard and esteem for his lordship, and would do him what service they could in their power; yet his highness would easily conceive that his lordship's present situation makes him by no means a proper person for me to intrust with matters of such confidence, and therefore I hoped he would be so good to me as to let this audience be entirely a secret to lord Bolingbroke, I having not given his lordship the least reason to suspect that I had any thoughts of waiting upon his highness.

"M. le Duc, in the most obliging manner, gave me his word, which I might always depend upon, that his lordship should know nothing of it. I then intimated to him that I hoped my own behaviour, as well as the credit I may presume to have with the king my master, would procure me the honour of his confidence and commands in any thing where their mutual interest was concerned, which I should endeavour to deserve. M. le Duc said several kind things to me on this occasion, with thanks for what I had imparted to him, of which

he would consider, as also what could possibly be done in this business, and accordingly I should hear from him in a few days; but that he must then wait on the young king, having already exceeded by a quarter of an hour the time when he is obliged, and never fails, to make his court to his majesty.

"Having given you an account of my conduct and my reasons for it in a situation I think none of the easiest, I must submit it to better judgments, and expect the advice and direction of others for my future behaviour; for I plainly foresee, that though I carry myself towards my lord Bolingbroke in a very civil and friendly manner, he must, upon reflection, conclude that I do not enter into his views and actions so heartily as he could wish. And I must observe at the same time, that his lordship has so familiar an acquaintance with the companions of M. le Duc, and is so personally esteemed by his highness, that he may be able to come to the knowledge of things of great moment."

"December 30. Since writing what goes before, lord Bolingbroke is returned from Versailles; and by the account he has given of his conversation with M. le Duc to Mr. Crawfurd and me separately, we have both reason to conclude that his highness has been faithful to me, and not given his lordship the least intimation of my having been with him."

Thus the address of Mr. Walpole relieved the ministers from the embarrassment under which they would have laboured, had they employed the agency of Bolingbroke; and he returned to England, to solicit his restoration, without any claim on their gratitude, or any pretext to interfere in the transaction of foreign affairs.

I have in a former work * given anecdotes of lord Bolingbroke, and endeavoured to account for the motives which induced Sir Robert Walpole to promote the bill for restoring him to his family inheritance, and enabling him to purchase estates within the kingdom. I likewise observed, that he owed this favour to the influence of the duchess of Kendal, whom he had bribed with 11,000*l.* and that the minister promoted the bill in conformity with the express injunctions of the king. But, for want of authentic documents, I could not ascertain that the failure of his complete restoration was owing to the opposition of Sir Robert Walpole. Some papers, however, which have since fallen under my notice, prove that the minister was threatened with his dismission if he did not promote the return of Bolingbroke, and that he compromised the business by consenting to the restitution of his family estate, but prevented his com-

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 25.

plete restoration; a fact which sufficiently accounts for the indignation of Bolingbroke, and his unceasing enmity to the character and administration of Sir Robert Walpole.

This exclusion of Bolingbroke from a seat in the house of peers, which might again have placed in his hands the helm of State, called forth the warm eulogium of archbishop Herring, who observes in a letter to Etough, "Bolingbroke was so abandoned in all respects, that I have always and shall reverence Sir Robert Walpole for setting his face full against him. *"

We find numerous instances in the Walpole papers of the constant intrigues of lord and lady Bolingbroke, with the party in France which was hostile to England. We insert a letter from Mr. Walpole to his brother on this subject, which was written at a time when the opposition hoped, by the assistance of France, to remove the Walpole ministry.

"Fontainbleau, Nov. 8-19, 1727.

"Dear Brother,

"I am favoured with yours of the 3d O. S. with the particular account of a correspondence and scheme carried on and settled by the way of trading sloops between lady

* Etough from Sir Robert Walpole; and Archbishop Herring to Etough, dated Sept. 11, 1753.

Bolingbroke and some persons here, of which the duke of Maine is the chief, (and even with the privity of the cardinal,) for the removal of the present administration, and for giving up Gibraltar as the price and condition of France's coming into it.

"As soon as I saw the duke of Maine mentioned as a sharer in the administration and confidence of the cardinal, I was persuaded there would be no manner of truth in this scheme, as lady Bolingbroke is pleased to brag. For although indeed from time to time and lately, some of the duke of Maine's flatterers, and particularly the Jacobites, have given out, that he is like to be at the head of affairs, there is not one thing of the world has so little colour of truth as far as it regards the cardinal; for there is no person of consideration in France that his eminence thinks so little capable of great affairs, and with whom he has so little to do as to business; and I am persuaded that as the cardinal is already preparing the French king's mind with respect to the persons in whom he should have a confidence, should any thing happen to himself, the duke of Maine is the last that he will recommend to him as a man of business. And this you may depend on as a truth, for I can already guess where the power will settle in that case, and as long as the cardinal lives, his loyalty and natural

affection for the king, whom he looks upon in a manner as his own child, and his majesty's reciprocal love and confidence in him only, will never let him quit his majesty's service, much less suffer any sharer in his administration and authority, of which, although he is perhaps the mildest man being, no minister of state was ever so jealous, or ever kept the other ministers at so great a distance, and in so much awe.

"Having said thus much, I am to acquaint you that I made no difficulty, pursuant to the strict friendship and intimacy between the cardinal and me, of which I have daily from all sides stronger proofs if possible than ever, to open to him madame Bolingbroke's pretended scheme and correspondence. He immediately gave me, in a manner that he is not capable of doing if it was not true, the strongest assurances of his being entirely ignorant of any thing of this kind, but added that madame Bolingbroke was of a proper disposition to say and do all I told him; and that Mr. Belleisle was a person of so aspiring a genius as to be capable of entering into any scheme that might make him considerable. As to M. le Blanc, that he was by nature too much given to intrigues, but in transacting the military business with him, in which the duke of Maine has great concern by his military employments, he did not find him more partial to

favour that duke than any other of the officers in the army; nor did he observe a particular intimacy between them. He then spoke of that duke as one that had indeed some wit in conversation, and some knowledge, but was of so timorous, irresolute, and inconstant a temper, that made him the least fit for business, or the administration, of any great man about court. In short, he thought a correspondence between madame Bolingbroke and some of the persons mentioned in your letter, very possible by the genius of them, but he was inclined to suspect madame des Fortes, wife to the comptroller general of the Finances sooner than any body, as having been, which is certainly true, an intimate acquaintance of madame Bolingbroke's: and therefore you may make your friend who gave you this intelligence, sound her about her friendship with madame des Fortes; and likewise about the manner of carrying on this correspondence with trading sloops; and what sloops they are, English or French; for his eminence is desirous of getting if possible to the bottom of it, as there is nothing that he detests so much as these underhand intrigues.

"Indeed I could almost take my oath that the cardinal is entirely a stranger to any thing of this whole matter, and he expressed himself to me, as indeed he does to others on proper occasions, in

such a manner of the present administration in England with regard to their integrity and abilities, that I am persuaded that no condition or consideration would tempt him to contribute to their removal; upon whose continuation I may say without flattery, he thinks the present peace and tranquillity of Europe depends.

"In short, we both agreed that madame Bolingbroke might have a correspondence with some persons here, and might falsely brag and endeavour to make them believe, that the credit of the present ministry in England is not so great but that they might be removed if they were not espoused by France, and for that purpose may name persons such as Sir S. C. and Mr. P.* of equal credit and capacity to succeed them, and she may on the other hand endeavour to make Sir S. C. and Mr. P. believe that the French court for the sake of restoring Gibraltar may be brought to abandon the present ministry in England, and to induce both sides by malicious and false insinuations to enter into some scheme to embroil matters and to serve lord Bolingbroke's ambitious views, for there is certainly nothing so black nor base that that dear couple will not say or do; though his lordship is the greatest poltron that was ever known.

*. Sir Spencer Compton and Mr. Pulteney.

"But as long as the cardinal lives, I defy them and all their inventions; and as to Gibraltar you may depend upon it that you will find his eminence, but in a calm way, as steady to support England in that point as he has been for the restitution of the prince Frederick. For I am sure that he thinks the interest of his master entirely depends upon a strict fidelity to his allies; and that his present majesty* by coming to the crown with so many advantageous circumstances, and by pursuing the same measures, and preserving the same ministry, ought to make the union between the two crowns stronger than ever, if all the cardinal's actions are entirely pointed that way; for he is, I may repeat it again if possible, better and more intimate with me than ever."

* George the Second.

CHAPTER 7.

1724.

Embarrassments and Uneasiness of Mr. Walpole from the Jealousy of Sir Luke Schaub, and the Affair of the Dukedom —Extracts from his Letters —Appointed Embassador to the Court of France — Schaub recalled, Carteret removed, and the Duke of Newcastle appointed Secretary of State.

THE perspicuous and interesting accounts which Mr. Walpole gave of the principles and characters of the French ministers, his address in gaining the confidence of the duke of Bourbon and count Morville, and his growing intimacy with Fleury, impressed the king with a favourable opinion of his talents for negotiation, and the brother ministers considered his continuance at Paris as necessary to further their views for the removal of Carteret. But the intrigues of Schaub, and the difficulties which Mr. Walpole experienced from the affair of the dukedom, rendered his situation extremely irksome, and his private correspondence is filled with complaints. After detailing his embarrassments in a letter to his brother, dated December 15, 1723, he continues, " I must therefore earnestly request of you, not for my own only, but for the sake of his majesty's service, to obtain for me immediate leave to return into England, since my continu-

ing here can be of no use, but to make a ridiculous figure, as well as Sir Luke Schaub. The whole French court begins to perceive what is impossible for me to prevent, that we look upon each other, and act, as if we were ministers of two different courts; for in the present juncture, where there is no particular business of a public nature depending, but the chief aim and view must be to get the best information we can, from all parts, relating to the continuation or change of ministers and measures, his way of talking, answering, and concluding, upon persons and things, is generally so different from mine, that I can't possibly act with him, in waiting upon ministers, or others of distinction, nor in any other step necessary for his majesty's service. And yet when I am at Versailles, he is so kind and assiduous an attendant upon me, ready, if I please, to introduce me to madame de Prie, the duchess of Bourbon, and others that may stand fairest for M. le Duc's favour, he being intimate with all these persons; and he is so fond of me, as not to be willing to make a visit without me, nor to let me make any visit without him. This simple appearance, of us two, begins to make the company smile upon one another, whenever we are together." After expatiating still further, on these mortifications, he concludes, "My heart is too full on this

disagreeable subject to dwell any longer upon it; and therefore I must insist upon your interceding for my return into England; because I assure you I have so much to say, that cannot possibly be wrote, of service to the king, and to his ministers, especially to those that I know, that I am persuaded my being in England as soon as I can, would be of more use than my continuing any longer here."

The affair of the dukedom increased his agitation, and exposed him to still greater embarrassment. The letter, which details his conversations with lord Bolingbroke, and his secret interview with the duke of Bourbon, sufficiently shews the difficulties which attended that delicate negotiation. In a second audience the duke likewise exposed the obstacles to the measure, the aversion of the young king, and the opposition of the nobility; he also severely commented on the conduct of Schaub, for endeavouring to entangle it with affairs of state. These declarations convinced Mr. Walpole, that all attempts to obtain the dukedom would be fruitless, and that the king's honour would be compromised by any further application. Impressed with this conviction, he writes to lord Townshend, January 5, 1724: "Can your lordship read, and consider a moment, my present and late dispatches, relating to the dukedom, and be

surprised at my pressing to get home? If your lordship did imagine I might have been of service to his majesty at this juncture, must not that imagination prove vain, if, while I am ordered to explain his majesty's real sense and sentiments in an affair, Schaub takes upon him to act in that very same affair, as a minister, in direct opposition to those sentiments, and with so much assurance and importunity, that it is impossible it should be thought here, he wants authority, support, and encouragement to do it? Who has the credit, and who is to be believed? Is not this an agreeable situation for his majesty's interest, at a court which is the centre of the greatest affairs in Europe? I confess I am so weak, that, not for my own, but his majesty's sake, it grieves me to the soul." Unable to obtain the removal of Schaub, the brother ministers hoped to relieve Mr. Walpole's uneasiness, by procuring for him the character of envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary; but, in consequence of his peculiar situation, this honour increased instead of removing his embarrassments, and he expresses to his brother his resolution not to deliver the credentials:

"Paris, January 20-31, 1723-4.

"Dear Brother,

"If some hasty expressions fell from my pen, last night, you must attribute it to the disorder

I was in upon the receipt of your letter of the 12th and 13th, which struck me all of a heap: my heart was full, and is still so, even ready to burst; and upon mature thoughts of a restless night, my sentiments are still the same, that the step you have taken to make me more easy, and some amends for not getting Schaub recalled, will make my situation more uneasy, and less capable to act for the service of his majesty, of my friends, and myself.

" Whether you were able to succeed in the attempt for recalling Schaub, and whether that success might not be attended with the ill consequences you apprehended, you certainly are the best judges. But to think the character you have obtained will give such marks of distinction as must bring all the credit and confidence of the court and ministers to center in me, is the weakest of imaginations; for it cannot fail of having, if I take it upon me, a quite contrary effect.

" A minister that is occasionally sent to act here, by virtue of a letter of cachet, as plenipotentiary for his master, is considered as having the credit and perhaps the secret of his court, and is regarded accordingly; but as soon as he is invested with the lowest character, that is admitted here, the friends under whose protection he is sent, are looked upon as not having the chief

interest at home, or as having a mean opinion of the person they send. This is so true, that no crowned head, nay no republic, ever employs a minister in France, that they intend shall have credit, but that they make him embassador extraordinary, or let him act as plenipotentiary by virtue of a private letter; that of a public envoy being no ways considered or respected here. This may look like pride or partiality in me; but I am afraid the application is too strong in the present case, with this difference only, that the credit and confidence I had at first by a private letter, is by the continuation of Schaub, and the support he has met with from friends at home, displayed in a proper manner, by his airs and insolence, already become doubtful and precarious, and, should I take upon me the public character of envoy, will be sunk to nothing; so that I cannot possibly rest any longer here, in either capacity, with honour, or be of any use at all.

"For some time the circumstance of being related to lord Townshend and you, and of being known to several foreign ministers of the first rank, the little reputation of my own, as to foreign affairs, gave me immediately credit and attention, and, in the minds of all sensible persons, foretold with pleasure the fall of Schaub; but he having had time to recollect himself, his

being engaged in a transaction that his majesty has secretly much at heart, has suspended the judgment of people, and begins to make them imagine it a doubtful case who has the credit at home, Townshend or Carteret, or who the credit abroad, Schaub or Walpole. Several little incidents, too trifling in themselves to name, which he improves to his own advantage, and which I scorned to take notice of, thinking the essential stroke would come at last, have contributed to this opinion; and however mortifying this honour done to me may be to Schaub's patron, Schaub himself will despise it; for as it is in itself here no great honour, he will say with justice, it only puts me upon an equal foot with him; he has already the pay of it, and nothing but his being a foreigner has hindered his having that and a greater character too. That as I had at first only a full power to sign the accession of the king of Portugal, so I have now the character of envoy, to enable me to act in some cases where he cannot; but the secret is still with him, and that will be soon seen. This is his language, and I am afraid the consequence will prove it too true; and you yourself will be startled when you read in the inclosed paper, marked No. 1, concerning an intrigue I have discovered carrying on, and is to be put in execution by count de Buy.

" The circumstance of that gentleman's being sent as embassador to England, and of my being declared about the same time envoy extraordinary in France, will confirm all I have said, and expose my relations and me to the greatest degree.

" The pitiful circumstance of all the dispatches wrote to us both jointly being carried (I suppose by private intimation to the messengers) to Schaub directly to Versailles, being opened by him first, and communicated to Morville, or other ministers there, before I know any thing of the matter; the dispatches for Spain and Cambray being inclosed to him, perused by him, forwarded by him, and made such use of as he shall think fit, without my communication or knowledge, I have thought hitherto below me to take notice of, and 'tis too late to do it now.

Hæ nugæ seria ducunt
In mala.

* * * * * * * * * *

He adds, " In short I am determined not to deliver my credentials, but have wrote a letter to lord Carteret acknowledging the receipt of them, and have given such a turn to it that I dare say you will not be uneasy at it, and therefore I send you a copy inclosed. His letter, by the bye, was the most dry, not to say the most

impertinent, I ever read from a secretary of State to a minister; but that don't trouble me at all. I have wrote a letter to you, marked No. 3, on this occasion, that perhaps you may not think it amiss to be imparted to his majesty, although it is conceived in terms as designed only for yourself."

While the contest in the cabinet was depending, lord Townshend, unable to effect the removal of Schaub, or procure the character of embassador for Mr. Walpole, prevailed on him to restrain his impatience, and to submit to these temporary mortifications. But Sir Luke Schaub, anxious to retain his situation at Paris, and aware that his continuance depended on the decision of the French court, relative to the affair of the dukedom, renewed his importunities to the duke of Bourbon, and fed the king with hopes that he should ultimately succeed through the interest of madame de Prie, who was no less anxious to procure a dukedom for her husband. This illusion continued two months, and was finally dissipated by the candid and explicit avowal of the duke of Bourbon to Mr. Walpole, of which he transmitted an account to lord Townshend.

"March 7, 1724. Having not paid my court to the duke of Bourbon a considerable time, I waited upon his highness the same evening, read

to him lord Carteret's letter, expressing his majesty's satisfaction at the manner in which the design of building a quay at Mardyke had been communicated by the French commissioners at Dunkirk, and declaring that the king has no objection to it. The duke of Bourbon made a suitable return of his sense of his majesty's goodness, and desired me to assure him that the king should always find the same marks of confidence and friendship towards him in all his actions; and then having paused for some time, he said, "But I am afraid I have disobliged the king in an affair where I did all that was in my power to comply with his desire." Finding me a good deal surprised, as I really was, he said, "I mean that of making M. de la Vrilliere a duke, for I perceive that his majesty seems very much to wish that it might be done. When this matter first came before me," continued he, "I turned it every way in my thoughts, and was resolved, upon the earnest and repeated solicitations of Sir Luke Schaub, to do whatever I was able to bring it about, though I can assure you I never gave him any promises or engagements that it would be done. At last, when I found that the more I considered it the more I was embarrassed, and that the steps I took towards it plainly shewed that the difficulties were insuperable, I was determined to give his

majesty a natural and true state of the affair relating to my own situation, as well as the French king's sentiments upon it; and even since I received your master's answer, by which I find he still wishes it might be done, I have again mentioned it to the king; but find no possibility of succeeding in it.

"I told him I hoped his highness would not make himself uneasy on this account, notwithstanding the esteem that his majesty has for some of the persons concerned, might make him willing to obtain such an advantage for their family, especially after it has gone so far, yet his highness knew very well it was never the king's intention to make this a matter of state, or embarrass his administration by it. And I dare say his majesty was convinced that his highness had personally used his good offices and credit to have it done: he added on this, that he knew, if the duke of Orleans had lived, it would never have been done, and that his majesty, as well as his late royal highness, had been deceived and imposed upon in the management of it; and let fall some expressions of resentment and contempt at Schaub's conduct and importunity. What the duke said to me upon this occasion I don't look upon as designed I should represent it from him to his majesty; but as unbosoming himself, not being

able to contain his concern, lest his majesty should be made to believe he had not done all that lay in his power to oblige him.

"I have since learnt, my lord, from undoubted intelligence, that Sir Luke Schaub himself now thinks this unfortunate business quite desperate, as to the dukedom; but that he has set another project on foot, in favour of madame de la Vrilliere, as a recompence for this disappointment, which is to get her made *Dame de Palais* to the infant queen, a greater honour, and still, more than the other, beyond what that family and quality can expect. However, Schaub is looking out precedents, to make this succeed; but as he will be able to find none, so I am told, the young king is already prevented and set against it."

The day after this audience Mr. Walpole again expresses to his brother his impatience to return: "I hope, before you receive this, you will have seen Mr. Poyntz, and have come to some certain determination about me and my little friend; it is impossible for me to continue in this state of acting jointly any longer, and therefore either he or I must be recalled."

Notwithstanding, however, these repeated remonstrances, and the efforts of the brother ministers, the influence of Carteret still protracted the disgrace of Schaub; till Mr. Walpole,

in consequence of private instructions from lord Townshend, though not without great reluctance, wrote an ostensible letter, urging the necessity of his immediate recal.

" My Lord, Paris, March 22, 1724.

" I am persuaded I need not convince your lordship of my readiness and zeal to serve his majesty, in any station, and in any manner, he shall be pleased to direct; which zeal for his majesty's service, and the experience of five months, obliges me to let your lordship know, that it is impossible for the king's interest to be carried on so effectually, as I could wish, as long as Sir Luke Schaub and I are to act jointly together here. I have no personal pique against him, having industriously avoided (notwithstanding the provocations I may have had) all disputes with him, that we might not expose ourselves, in prejudice to his majesty's affairs; yet our way of acting and thinking, in regard to persons and things, is so very different, that I cannot live in any confidence or intimacy with him; and I am at the same time so constantly attended, watched, and observed by him, when I go to Versailles, that it is impossible for me to cultivate and settle such a correspondence and credit with persons of the chief authority here, as might be useful for his majesty's service,

and not at all difficult to obtain, were I entirely free and independent of Sir Luke Schaub.

"Had Sir Luke Schaub, by an extraordinary capacity in business, and by a suitable conduct and behaviour as a minister, acquired any reputation or particular esteem at this court, I am sure I should readily submit my judgment to his in every thing, and earnestly desire that the management of his majesty's affairs should be entirely trusted in his hands. But if I may venture to speak plain to your lordship, in confidence, and as my near relation, he is so far from having such a character, that he has rendered himself odious to many, and disagreeable to every body, and were it not for his majesty's commission here, he would make a very inconsiderable, I had like to have said a contemptible figure, in the eyes of all, as well French as foreigners.

"Did I not find this by my own observations to be true, I would scorn to have mentioned it at all; having no other motive for doing it but a serious concern for his majesty's honour and service, which, in my conscience, I think never can be supported as they should be, while Sir Luke Schaub is employed here."

This letter produced the desired effect; Mr. Walpole was nominated embassador, and Schaub was recalled. Soon afterwards Carteret was re-

moved from the office of secretary of state to the government of Ireland; he was succeeded by the duke of Newcastle, and the ascendancy of the brother ministers became uncontrolled *.

* In justice to the talents and memory of Sir Luke Schaub, we think it necessary to observe that Mr. Walpole's remarks on his character and conduct, must be considered as party effusions, written at the moment of chagrin and asperity, when the passions of both were roused by the interest of the state for which they were contending. The same remark would apply to the letters of Sir Luke Schaub, had they been published.

CHAPTER 8.

1724.

Influence of Mr. Walpole in excluding Torcy from the French Councils — Views of Philip the Fifth on the Crown of France — Embassy of Marshal Tessé to Madrid — Abdication of Philip — Conferences with Fleury on that Event.

EXCLUSIVE of the embarrassments arising from the influence of lord Carteret, the jealousy of Schaub, and the affair of the dukedom, the embassy of Mr. Walpole was pregnant with difficulties which might have discouraged the most able negotiator. He was to prevent the ill consequences which seemed likely to arise from the enmity of the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, without giving umbrage to either; he was to keep the court of France steady to the engagements with England, to manage the unbending spirit of the imperial embassador, to counteract the intrigues of Spain, and, above all, to take all necessary precautions to secure the succession of the French crown in the house of Orleans, provided Louis the Fifteenth should die without issue.

One of his first and successful measures, which prevented a change of system, was the exclusion of Torcy from the department of foreign affairs. The appointment of that mini-

ster was secretly promoted by the duke of Bourbon, who, anxious to obtain the assistance of a person of such experience and capacity, by means of his agents suggested to Mr. Walpole, that the principles of Torcy, in respect to the succession of the crown of France, were changed, and that his admission into the ministry would not affect the connection between the two countries. Among others, even Bolingbroke became an advocate for Torcy. In a conference with lord Bolingbroke, in which he hints at the removal of Frejus, Mr. Walpole says, "I asked him, in case Frejus should be removed, in whose hands the credit and conduct of affairs would chiefly fall, considering the weakness of the first minister? He shrugged up his shoulders and said, 'I can't tell; his highness would certainly be at a loss: Morville is an honest man, but is by no means of a genius equal to the prime direction of affairs:' and after some other broken thoughts and imperfect discourses, being upon his legs to go away, he let fall, that perhaps Torcy, when all is said and done, might act in a right way for the present system. Upon which I, in the strongest manner, laid home to his lordship the *letter* as mentioned above, and appealed to him whether it was possible to conceive that Torcy had altered those intentions, or whether it was not impossible to make the Eng-

lish nation believe it? His lordship replied, 'What you have urged is very strong, and I can't tell what to say to it;' and owned that M. Torcy had himself not long since in conversation upbraided his lordship with his having insisted, when secretary of State, upon king Philip's making then his immediate choice of the crown of France or Spain *."

But Mr. Walpole made the strongest remonstrances against his appointment, and did not desist until he had obtained positive assurances from Fleury that he should never be employed.

Mr. Walpole gave no less striking proofs of his influence, by preventing the French court from allowing the duke of Ormond to make a temporary residence in France, and prevailing on Fleury not to receive a visit from bishop Atterbury †. But the point in which he surmounted the greatest difficulties was to counteract the intrigues of the Spanish party, and preserve the succession to the crown of France in conformity with the treaty of Utrecht.

* Mr. Walpole to lord Townshend, Paris, January 12, 1724.

With respect to Torcy's celebrated letter to lord Bolingbroke, about the nullity of renunciations, see page 27.

† For an account of the flight and attainder of Ormond, and the trial and banishment of Atterbury, see Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, ch. 2. and 22.

Philip the Fifth, considering his solemn renunciation of the crown as an act of nullity, resolved to assert his right to the succession, should Louis the Fifteenth die without issue; and the duke of Bourbon, in consequence of his enmity to the house of Orleans, was inclined to promote his claims. At this particular juncture he nominated marshal Tessé, who was friendly to the lineal descent, embassador to Madrid, with a view, as it was suspected, to settle the terms of his eventual succession.

While the English embassador was labouring to procure intelligence concerning the real object of this mission, and to thwart the designs of Tessé, through the medium of Fleury, the unexpected abdication of Philip filled Paris with surprise and alarm. The first notice of this extraordinary event was communicated to the English court by Mr. Walpole, in a dispatch to lord Townshend, dated Sunday night, January 23, 1724; in which he describes this act as wholly unknown to the court of France, and only the effect of religious melancholy. Notwithstanding these assurances, lord Townshend having expressed his suspicion that the abdication was concerted with the duke of Bourbon, and that Philip purposed to retire into France, Mr. Walpole proved, from the conduct and astonishment of the French ministry, that there

was no collusion between the two courts. He did not, however, neglect his usual precaution; but with extreme address drew forth the opinion of Fleury, and obtained his promise to oppose every attempt of Philip the Fifth to secure the eventful succession to the crown of France.

"On Tuesday," he says in a letter to lord Townshend, of January 23, "I made a visit to bishop Frejus, at Versailles, (when the news began to take air,) and as company came in, and I was taking my leave, he took me aside to the window, and spoke of the abdication, with his eyes and hands lifted to heaven; with the greatest agony and surprise, he let fall, in imperfect sentences, how untimely it was, how prejudicial it might prove to the present system, and particularly to the French interest. Spanish councils, Spanish measures might take place, he added, but he hoped the union between England and France would still subsist, as more necessary than ever. I told him, he might depend upon that. 'Ay,' says he, squeezing me earnestly by the hand, 'but in a stricter manner if possible; and something new should be found out for that purpose.'"

In a subsequent conversation, during a private conference, the bishop expressed his conviction that no person in France was previously acquainted with Philip's abdication; and in

another still more confidential, which I cannot withhold from the reader, declared his resolution to prevent his retiring into France, and that he had secretly obtained a promise from the young king to that effect.

" Paris, March 7, 1724. Being, as I have hinted to your lordship in some of my former letters, upon a foot of friendship and familiarity with bishop Frejus, without affecting to see him often, and talking in confidence to him when I do, I made him, after a considerable absence, a visit on the 4th instant at Versailles. * * *

" In discoursing with him about Spain, I had an opportunity to ask the bishop, whether they had any news of marshal Tessé's arrival? He said, No; but that he had received a letter from him, from Bayonne, in which the marshal had given him a sort of a wipe, in telling him, that he would find upon his arrival *'qu'il n'endosseroit pas le golilio, mais qu'il seroit bon françois.'*

" As I pretended not to understand the meaning of that phrase, he explained it, by telling me, that before Tessé set out from hence, he, the bishop, had suggested to the duke of Bourbon, to insist upon the marshal's engagement, not to take the least steps that might be a prejudice to the renunciation; but to pursue only his orders, relating to the interest of France, in respect to Spain; that as the marshal

knew that this doctrine came from him, the bishop, he had made use of this way of speaking to let him know that he had not forgot his instructions.

" Considering the natural principles of the bishop, as a jesuit, and his former intimacy and acquaintance with the ministers of the old court, one would not think that he should have the renunciation, and the separation of the two crowns, much at heart. Indeed I never heard him mention them once to me till after the abdication of king Philip, and ever since that he has often spoke to me very earnestly upon them, as the foundation and corner-stone for the tranquillity and peace of Europe, and took this occasion to let me know that we cannot be too careful not to suffer the least attempt to weaken that scheme.

" I asked him, then, whether he thought there was reason to apprehend any danger of that nature? He said, No; but that he was determined in these principles; that there having been a rumour as if king Philip might desire to come to France for the air and his health, although he was persuaded there was no manner of grounds for it; yet he thought fit to represent to the young king the inconveniences and embarras that such a thing would occasion, as well as an alarm and an umbrage to the most

considerable powers in Europe; and therefore he had prepared his majesty to give an absolute refusal, should a proposition of that nature be insinuated to him, by any one; 'for,' says he, 'it is certainly right to frame and prepossess the minds of young princes in matters of consequence to their government.'

"I told him, I had heard formerly of such a report; but that I thought the reasons of State in respect to all parties in France, as long as the young king was well, were so obvious against it, that I did not think it worth taking notice of: however I was not wanting, my lord, to applaud the bishop's conduct and wisdom in his care and management of his royal pupil; and it is certain that, upon the least hint of any thing that may be thought of to be done, the bishop is early to give the king such impressions as he thinks proper about it, of which he finds the effect by the king's steadiness to him without a rival."

Fleury also acquainted him that "the steps taken already at Madrid, in the administration of affairs, were entirely Spanish; that *l'etiquette espagnole*, which had been disused, under the French government, as to the regulation and proceedings of the court and councils, was renewed; the antient formalities and Spanish puncto, for the hours of the king's rising, pray-

ing, dining, and giving audiences, and attending the public affairs, were already put into practice; and in short, that the great monarchy of Spain, by returning to its former preciseness and grandeur within itself, would become indifferent, and of no use to the rest of Europe*."

The English embassador, however, though fully convinced of the candour and sincerity of Fleury, did not wholly rely on his assurances; but discovered the sentiments of the duke and duchess of Maine, of marshal Villars, and other persons of the Spanish party, and found them impressed with the greatest contempt of Philip's bigotry and weakness. "These particular facts," he justly observes to lord Townshend, "collected from the mouths and actions of those who must have had the principal contrivance and management of any political scheme, to be the consequence of Philip's abdication, are such strong proofs to the contrary, that I thought your lordship would excuse my troubling you with them; especially since I find that Flanders, Holland, and even Spain itself, are not without their speculations to the same purpose. At Amsterdam they are as much in alarm and confusion as if king Philip was actually at Paris; whereas, if I can make any judgment of the

* Paris, Feb. 9, 1724. Walpole Papers.

sentiments of all sorts of people here, should the present young French king die to-morrow, the duke of Orleans would succeed immediately to the crown, and Philip's interest and right would not so much as be named, or enter into any body's head*."

Fortunately for the peace of Europe, the views of Philip on the throne of France were defeated by the premature death of his son Louis, to whom he had resigned the crown, the dismission of his daughter, and the subsequent marriage of Louis the Fifteenth, which again tore asunder the bond of union between France and Spain, and cemented still closer the connection of France with England.

* Paris, Feb. 9, 1724. Walpole Papers.

CHAPTER 9.

1724—1725.

Dismission of the Spanish Infanta, the intended Bride of Louis the Fifteenth — Views of the Duke of Bourbon in favour of his Sister — Opposition and Conduct of Fleury — Alarm of the Duke of Bourbon on the French King's Illness — Proposals for an English Princess; declined by George the First — Mr. Walpole's Correspondence — His Conferences with Fleury — Marriage of Louis the Fifteenth with the Daughter of Stanislaus Letzinski.

THE conjectures concerning the abdication and resumption of the crown by Philip the Fifth, had scarcely subsided, before new reports of the dismission of the infanta, and projects for the marriage of Louis the Fifteenth, attracted the public curiosity, and gave a new source of embarrassment to the English embassador.

The accession of Spain to the quadruple alliance was principally owing to a secret article between Philip and the duke of Orleans, which equally favoured the interests of both parties. Louis the Fifteenth was affianced to the infanta, Mary Anne; and the Prince of Asturias, afterwards Louis the First, espoused Elizabeth, fourth daughter of the regent. The infanta being only in her fifth year, the hopes of an heir to the French crown were deferred to a distant period;

and the eventual succession to the throne of France was still open, to which Philip, notwithstanding the most solemn renunciations, always looked with anxious expectation.

On the death of the duke of Orleans, the French nation entertained hopes of dissolving a match ill calculated to promote the security of France, and the tranquillity of Europe. The marshals Villars and d'Uxelles, and many of the French ministers, hinted to Mr. Walpole the probability and propriety of such a measure, and even Fleury himself expressed a wish to delay the solemnization of the fiançailles.

The duke of Bourbon was most embarrassed what conduct to adopt on this delicate occasion. He was on one side interested in promoting the marriage of the young king with the infanta, and in preserving the succession in the line of the princes of the blood; because, in case of the decease of the king and the duke of Orleans, who were both unmarried, and of infirm constitutions, he was next heir to the throne. On the other side, the implacable enmity of the duke of Orleans rendered his accession an alarming event. The duke of Bourbon had, therefore, only the choice of two alternatives; one to promote the eventual succession of Philip, and his son by the first wife, to the throne of France, and to settle the crown of Spain on his children

by Elizabeth Farnese; the second, to send back the infanta, and to marry the young king to a princess of mature age*. On his first entrance into the administration, he was inclined to promote the claims and to secure the friendship of the king of Spain, and, with this view, had deputed marshal Tessé to convey the strongest assurances of his fidelity and attachment†. Soon, however, the general wish of the nation to provide a suitable consort for the king, and his increasing animosity to the duke of Orleans, who was recently married‡, induced him to adopt the resolution of dismissing the infanta. He accordingly communicated his intention to Fleury in 1724, and proposed his own sister, mademoiselle de Sens; but the bishop opposing this match, and urging the impropriety of irritating Philip, while the negotiations at Cambray were pending, the duke acquiesced, and postponed the execution of his design. Things remained in this state of suspense until the dangerous illness of Louis the Fifteenth revived his apprehensions, and he determined to counteract the succession of the duke of Orleans, by mar-

* Mr. Walpole to lord Townshend, December 22, 1723.

† Memoires de Montgon, tom. 3, p. 222.

‡ The duchess of Orleans married her son to the princess of Baden, without the knowledge or approbation of the duke of Bourbon, which increased his animosity.

rying the king to a princess of mature age. St. Simon relates a striking anecdote of his extreme agitation on this critical occasion*.

Finding the opposition of Fleury to his sister's marriage with the king insuperable, he directed his attention to the other princesses of Europe, and selected Anne, grand-daughter of George the First, who was in the sixteenth year of her age, and possessed great beauty and accomplishments. It is not easy to trace the precise period and origin of this choice; but it probably arose from female intrigues; for, in May 1724, Sir Luke Schaub, in his audience, on returning from Paris, offended George the First, by indiscreetly proposing a marriage between the French king and one of the English princesses†; an overture made at the instigation of madame de Prie and madame de la Vrilliere, with the concurrence of lady Darlington, and the secret co-

* Le roi Louis XV. etant tombé malade sous le ministère de M. le Duc, effraya tellement le prince ministre, quoique le mal ne fût pas menaçant, qu'il se releva une nuit en sursaut, prit sa robe de chambre, et monta dans la derniere anti-chambre du roi: il etoit seul avec une bougie à la main, et y trouva Marechal qui, etonné de cette apparition, alla à lui, et lui demanda ce qu'il venoit de faire. Il trouva un homme egaré, hors de soi, qui ne put se rassurer sur ce que Marechal lui dit de la maladie, et à qui enfin d'effroi et de plenitude il echappa; *que deviendrai-je?* en repondant tout bas à son bonnet de nuit: *Je n'y serai pas repris; s'il en rechappe, il faut le marier.*" Oeuvres de St. Simon, tom. 8, p. 198.

† The duke of Newcastle to Mr. Walpole, May 25, 1724.

operation of lord Carteret. On Fleury's first rejection of mademoiselle de Sens, it appears that the duke of Bourbon entertained thoughts of the princess Anne, with a view of securing the assistance of England against the vengeance of Philip; but, from apprehensions that the princess could not be induced to change her religion, did not venture to make a formal proposal.

Soon after the king of France's recovery, at the suggestion of count Broglio, the French embassador in England, he was encouraged to make an indirect overture to George the First. Broglio having insinuated to the countess of Darlington the resolution of the duke of Bourbon to dismiss the infanta, and his own embarrassment in the choice of another consort; she replied, "Why do you amuse yourself with trifles, and why do you not instantly demand one of our princesses for the young king? I have reason to believe that your proposal would not be rejected."

In consequence of this hint, the French embassador being ordered to request a private audience, communicated to George the First a letter from the duke of Bourbon, announcing, under the seal of the strictest secrecy, the resolution of dismissing the infanta. He then begged leave to suggest a thought of his own, for

which he requested his majesty's indulgence. "Knowing, as I do," he added, "the anxious desire of the duke of Bourbon to unite the two crowns by the strongest ties, and having been eye-witness of the great and invaluable qualities of the princess Anne, I must beg leave to express my wish, that your majesty would give her in marriage to the king my master, which will be so much for the honour and interest of both kingdoms, that if it can be accomplished, nothing will be able to disturb the tranquillity, or oppose the views of the two crowns." The king replied, that notwithstanding the advantage of such a match; and his earnest desire of taking every opportunity to shew his regard for the king of France, and improve the good correspondence subsisting between the two crowns; yet the objection on the point of religion being insurmountable, he must decline the acceptance of the proposal.

Broglio, not checked by this repulse, communicated his proposal to the duke of Newcastle and lord Townshend, and earnestly exhorted them to employ their influence over the king, in favour of the match; nor did he desist until they proved that the king's attachment to his religion could not be shaken, and that the marriage of any branch of the royal family with

a Papist was contrary to the established laws of the kingdom *.

While this negotiation was pending, various reports were circulated at Paris, that a match with an English princess was concluded; and the refusal of the duke of Bourbon to affiance the young king to the infanta, at the stipulated time, seemed to confirm these rumours. "This news," says the English embassador, "was no sooner known, but it was in the mouth of all sorts of people, that the infanta was to be sent home immediately, a match being concluded between the French king and one of the young princesses of England; and if she was actually arrived at Calais for that purpose, the discourse would scarce be more positive, and more generally believed. Several stories are told, even by people that should know better, of the manner

* "We acquainted him," writes the duke of Newcastle to Mr. Walpole, "with the main view and end of the revolution, and protestant succession, which was the preservation of the protestant religion in these kingdoms; and shewed him, by the general exclusion of the Papists, in the first act of king William, confirmed by the present act of settlement, whereby no Papist of his present majesty's family, nor any other prince or princess, of that religion, or that should intermarry with a Papist, were capable of succeeding to the crown: how liable to the greatest censure such a step would be, in this country, and how highly criminal those would be thought who should presume to advise it." Whitehall, March 12, 1725.

in which this affair has been negotiated. Some derive it from a management antecedent to my being minister here; others attribute it to the intrigues of various ladies, at this and at the court of England; but the more general applause and honour of it, though undeservedly, is given to me. Your grace will easily imagine, who knows what a stranger I am to any thing of this affair, how much I have been embarrassed, these two or three days, how to behave myself, without appearing embarrassed at all. Numbers of all sorts of people have been very watchful and observing of my countenance, words, and carriage, and have endeavoured to turn me all ways, by various questions and insinuations; some by making me compliments; others by desiring my protection here at court, as if the thing was actually done. But my conduct, I hope, has been even, decent, and irreproachable, without clearing up their doubts, or saying any thing that might give credit or discredit to it*."

In this state of uncertainty, Mr. Walpole, on the 6th of March, was informed by Morville, that the infanta was to be dismissed; and this information was confirmed the same day by Fleury, who requested a secret conference on a

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, March 13, 1725, N. S.

subject of the highest importance and delicacy. This conference took place on the 13th at Versailles, and proved to the English embassador, the confidence which the bishop reposed in him. After recapitulating, under the strongest injunctions of secrecy, the events which had led to the dismission of the infanta, and stating his own objections, not to the expediency, but to the precipitation of the measure, he acquainted him with the proposal to be made by Broglio, and detailed the motives which induced the duke of Bourbon to demand an English princess.

He then stated his own opinion as adverse to the match, which he considered as disadvantageous to both nations. "As to France," he said, "where the unity of religion is absolutely necessary, I am apprehensive that the eldest princess, having been educated in the principles of the protestant religion, to the age of sixteen, under a mother, who, from attachment to that religion, rejected the hand of the emperor, would retain an inward sense and zeal for it, notwithstanding any abjuration which she might be induced to make for the sake of a crown. Her secret attachment to that persuasion might encourage the Jansenists to concur with the Protestants, still remaining in France, to foment internal troubles, in regard to religion. But should the king die first, and she

become regent, and have the education of the children, no one knows the divisions and disturbances it might occasion. Neither do I see, in point of policy, that any good would accrue to this nation, nor any prospect but what might portend a rupture, or perhaps a war between the two nations; and at present the situation of Europe renders it the interest of both to maintain a stricter union and harmony together.

"As to Great Britain, the policy, religion, and constitution of the government are adverse to such a match. France can never receive a queen, unless she becomes a Roman Catholic, and it would be inconsistent with the dignity of England to consent to the marriage of one of the royal family to a catholic prince, without her having the liberty to enjoy and exercise her religion, in her own way; an indulgence always granted to the catholic queens of England since the reformation. But, as I am informed, the laws of England are against a match of this nature, founded on the experience of the ill consequences that have ensued from thence; having suffered the greatest convulsions only by the marriage of one of their kings to Roman Catholics. But should an English princess, after embracing the Roman catholic religion, or any of her children, have a title to the crown of Great Britain, they might, notwithstanding any

renunciation or exclusion by act of parliament, pretend to the succession; and the bare possibility of the great troubles which might overwhelm, or at least, constantly threaten the British nation, are, though distant, yet too terrible to be incurred.

"The people of England may be jealous lest so near an alliance with so considerable a power as France in their neighbourhood, may endanger their liberties, which might have been their fate, had the late king James accepted the offer of an army from Louis the Fourteenth. Persons of all parties and principles in England would join in one general cry against it. The Jacobites would be outrageous, because it would be the greatest stroke to their present, as well as distant views, in favour of the pretender; the disaffected would consider it as the most popular topic for clamour, and those that are affected to the present establishment, in church and state, would think the reasons, with regard to the religion and constitution of their country, of greater weight than any political reasons, however plausible. It would create in general, such a diffidence, fears, and jealousies in the minds of the people, as might render his majesty's government uneasy for the future, and put it out of his power to be of that use, in conjunction with France, for the preservation of the peace

of Europe, as the present situation of affairs requires; and I will freely own to you, it is the real interest of France, at this juncture, that the king of England should enjoy the greatest security and tranquillity at home. Lastly, I apprehend that the protestant powers abroad will be extremely dissatisfied, and jealous of such an alliance.

"These are the reasons which occurred to me upon this great crisis, and determined my opinion that France should not demand an English princess, because the appearance of a refusal, which I apprehend will be the case, may have an ill effect on our present good understanding; and though it is intended that the overture should be made by the French embassador, or to his majesty, as only coming from the duke of Bourbon, in his private capacity, yet even that would, if known, be regarded as little less than a request. But since my opinion did not prevail, I deem it advisable that you should represent what I have said, as the sentiments of some persons of sense and consequence, without mentioning my name; for I am anxious that nothing should be done which may tend in the least degree to shake the harmony subsisting between the two crowns. And as you are fully apprised of the state of affairs here, it may not be thought too forward in you to suggest, that, upon the French

embassador's mentioning this matter to his majesty, he might be told by the king, in that engaging and obliging manner natural to his majesty, that nothing in the world would be so agreeable to his inclinations as such an alliance, and so fortunate for the public good of Europe at this juncture, would the religion and constitution of England suffer it to be done; and though the difficulties, on that account, were insurmountable, yet he would continue to cultivate and promote the union between the two crowns with as much earnestness as if the additional obligation of what had been hinted could possibly take place. I likewise hope, that if you dispatch a courier on this occasion, he may arrive in England before count Broglio will have proceeded any further than to communicate only the resolution of sending back the infanta.

"He concluded his discourse,"—adds Mr. Walpole, "with repeating to me his utmost concern and apprehensions of what may be the consequences of this whole matter being precipitated with regard to Spain, and the present posture of affairs in Europe. All the terrible ideas of a rupture with that kingdom, of a marriage between the prince of Asturias and one of the arch-duchesses, and of the great advantages that would accrue to the emperor, seized him at once; and I could perceive, too, that the fear

of disobliging the pope, who will not have been consulted or acquainted by France, with the affair, until it is publicly talked of, had no small share in his concern. * * * * * *

"I then asked him whether he did not suspect, from the whole management of this affair, that M. le Duc's chief, and perhaps only aim, was to bring about, at last, the marriage of his own sister with the French king. He told me that it might be so; but as long as he had the least influence with his most christian majesty, he would oppose it to the last. I then concluded with my particular thanks to him for his steadiness in preserving the union between the two nations, desiring him to direct his utmost credit and application to that great view, as what might become more necessary than ever. I concluded with expressing my apprehensions (which I hope are groundless) that this affair may end in the disgrace or retreat of Frejus from all business, being strongly persuaded that M. le Duc had never laid aside the thought of marrying his sister to the French king, and that his pretending to seek a match in England, and suffering it to be talked of, by all sorts of people, in so public a manner, is not so much out of a desire to have it done, as a justification of his sending away the infanta, at this juncture, in having provided a suitable and honourable

match for his most christian majesty, which, in the case of his sister, would not have been so popular in the nation, nor have so good an appearance in the eyes of the world *."

On the 16th a confidential communication of Broglio's proposal to the king, and his majesty's answer, was transmitted by the duke of Newcastle; "all which" Mr. Walpole says, "I received with that deep sense of satisfaction, gratitude, and duty, for his majesty's unshaken steadiness to the religion and laws of our country, that is due from a true protestant, and a loyal subject." Speaking of his next interview with Fleury, he observes, "I found bishop Frejus very glad, as he told me he had been very impatient to see me; and he expressed immediately his great satisfaction at his majesty having, as he had seen by count Broglio's relation, given an answer to the proposal of the marriage, so prudent, and so worthy of himself with regard to his own conscience, and the constitution of the kingdom he governs, as well as to the union and friendship between the two crowns. I then acquainted him how extremely pleased his majesty was with his way of reasoning (of which I had given an account to your grace without naming him) on this subject,

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, Paris, March 13 1725.

and that the king had acted entirely agreeable to his sentiments, without knowing them. I acquainted him at the same time with his majesty's sincere intentions to do all in his power to pacify the indignation of Spain *.

Fleury then hinted that the daughter of Stanislaus Letzinski, titular king of Poland, was most likely to become the consort of Louis the Fifteenth; but reiterated his resolution of retiring from court, should the duke of Bourbon succeed in recommending his own sister.

The answer of the duke of Newcastle to this insinuation will shew the high confidence which the English cabinet reposed in Fleury, and their full reliance on his friendship: "I cannot conceal from your excellency the great concern that his majesty shews at the hint, in the latter part of your letter, that this affair may possibly end in the retreat of bishop Frejus from public business, whereby the French king would lose a most able and faithful servant, and his majesty a sincere and steady friend. The king is the more touched with this, it being very probable that what you say would undoubtedly be the cause, if it may happen to be the case, both from the accounts you send, and from the manner in which M. de Broglio talked yesterday to the king, who could not forbear expressing his de-

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, March 28, 1725.

sire, that the king his master, since he could not have one of our young princesses, might be married to mademoiselle de Sens*; though at the same time he owned there might be in it some difficulty upon M. le Duc, he having been the occasion of sending back the infanta.

"If this should happen, his majesty would have you use your utmost credit and interest with bishop Frejus to dissuade him from so rash and unadvised a step, and lay before him the ill consequences that may arise both to France and England from such a resolution; as also the uneasiness that it would afterwards be to him, if any thing should happen, for want of his assistance, that might alter the good correspondence between the two crowns, to which he has so much contributed†."

The resolution, however, of Fleury, was not put to the test; his influence with the king was sufficiently powerful to counteract the project of the duke of Bourbon in favour of his sister.

* St. Simon, and the Memoirs of Richelieu, erroneously mention mademoiselle de Vermandois, fourth sister of the duke of Bourbon, as the person in whose favour he solicited the match, and attributed its failure solely to the intrigues of madame de Prie, without even hinting at the opposition of Fleury.—St. Simon, tom. xi. p. 201, and Memoirs de Richelieu, tom. iv. chap. 6.

† The duke of Newcastle to Mr. Walpole, March 11, 1724-5.

But he acted with extreme caution and dexterity, and though he excluded mademoiselle de Sens, whose elevation might have given the preponderance to the interest of the duke of Bourbon, yet he did not interfere in the choice of the bride, lest any dislike of the young king to his consort might expose him to future reproach. The views of the duke and madame de Prie were accordingly directed to Maria Letzinski, daughter of Stanislaus, who was twenty-two years of age, not deficient in beauty, and whose situation and character seemed likely to render her wholly dependant on those who had contributed to her elevation. To this choice Fleury made no opposition; and as the king testified a total indifference, the marriage was solemnized on the 15th of August.

In arranging the household of the new queen, madame du Prie was to be dame du palais; Paris Duverney, secretaire des commandemens; and the place of grand almoner was offered to Fleury. The bishop, however, objected to the appointment of madame de Prie, and even proposed to the duke of Bourbon that she should receive, but decline the offer, as more honourable to her than the place would be advantageous. He communicated this circumstance, in confidence, to Mr. Walpole, and expressed his resolution to refuse the place of grand almoner,

as he could not, in honour and conscience, live in a family encompassed with such creatures as madame de Prie, and Duverney, who had been a common soldier in the guards. Mr. Walpole strongly dissuaded him from this rash resolution: "You cannot," he said, "do greater service to the persons for whom you entertain so just an aversion, as you will throw the whole power of the queen's household into their hands, and they will nominate a creature of their own in your place. The interest of France, as well as your own honour and conscience, exact it of you, not to take this unadvised step. When the queen is settled in France, a new scene may open. I have no doubt but your capacity and virtue will act the chief part, and an opportunity may offer of destroying the credit of those whose principles and actions are inconsistent with the dignity of the crown*." The repeated exhortations of Mr. Walpole finally succeeded. Fleury accepted the office of grand almoner, although madame de Prie was nominated dame du palais, and Duverney secretaire des commandemens.

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, April 27, 1725.

CHAPTER 10.

1725.

Resentment of Philip the Fifth on the Dismission of the Infanta — His Negotiations with the Emperor — Treaties of Vienna and Hanover — Influence of Mr. Walpole in the Councils of France — Retreat and Recal of Fleury.

THE dismission of the infanta, and the indiscreet manner in which it was announced by the abbot de Livry *, inflamed the vengeance of the king and queen of Spain, and precipitated the execution of those measures which they had previously meditated.

In 1720, Spain acceded to the quadruple alliance; and, in pursuance of that treaty, a congress of the ministers from the contracting powers was held at Cambray, to settle the contested points between the Emperor and Philip, under the mediation of England and France. But the letters expectative, for the eventual investiture of Don Carlos, to the succession of Tuscany, Parma and Placentia, which the emperor promised to expedite within two months after the ratification, were not delivered till November 1723; by which delay it was evident that he wished to elude the performance of his engagements.

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 27.

George the First, however, deemed himself bound in honour and justice to execute, in concert with France, his engagements in favour of Don Carlos; but the emperor, long accustomed to blind complaisance from Great Britain, expected that an elector of Hanover, upon that throne, should be still more subservient to his views and desires, and accordingly resented the king's fidelity to his engagements, as an insult. At the same time the haughty spirit of Elizabeth Farnese, who governed the counsels of Spain, was irritated against the mediating powers for not compelling the emperor, by force of arms, to settle the points in dispute.

Spain and the emperor being thus equally dissatisfied, the negotiations of the congress, which opened at Cambray in January 1724, were languid; and the French and English ministers in vain endeavoured to relax the unbending spirit of the imperial, or overcome the diplomatic punctilios of the Spanish plenipotentiaries. In fact the court of Madrid had, in November 1724, deputed Ripperda to Vienna, and tendered without the knowledge of the mediating powers, overtures of reconciliation to the emperor, who lured Elizabeth Farnese with the hopes of obtaining an arch-duchess in marriage to one of the Spanish infants.

Such was the state of the imperial and Spanish

courts, when the dismission of the infanta excited the resentment of Philip, and his vindictive queen, against France. They recalled their plenipotentiaries from Cambray, and offered the sole mediation to England. But the British cabinet, sensible of the advantages derived from the French alliance, and faithful to their engagements, had no sooner declined this insidious offer, than the court of Spain suddenly closed the long pending disputes with the emperor, and on the 1st of May Ripperda concluded the treaty of Vienna.

It would be tedious and unnecessary to detail the articles of this treaty, some of which were secret and hostile to the trade, possessions, and constitution of England, as well as to the interests of France and Holland. Great preparations were made by the emperor and Spain; Russia was induced to enter into the alliance, and the princes of the empire solicited to join the standard of their chief. These hostile appearances occasioned a series of negotiations, which terminated in the treaty of Hanover, concluded between England, France, and Prussia, to which Holland and Sweden afterwards acceded.

Having, in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, detailed the origin, motives, and tendency of that treaty, it will be sufficient to observe, that the complicated negotiations, which occu-

pied every power in Europe, ultimately centered at Paris; and their successful termination was principally owing to the address of the British embassador, who managed with equal dexterity the irresolute character of the duke of Bourbon, the dilatory temper of Morville, and the supple, insinuating, and cautious spirit of Fleury.

The difficulty of influencing the French cabinet was increased by the alarms of George the First, by the ardent temper of lord Townshend, and by the anxiety of the British ministry to counterbalance the active efforts of the emperor, with equal vigour on the side of the allies. They did not appreciate the delicate situation of the French ministers, who, though aware that the union between the two crowns secured the internal tranquillity of their country, were naturally averse to an open rupture with a prince of the house of Bourbon, the uncle of their king, whom France, at an enormous expence of blood and treasure, had placed on the throne of Spain. Hence their conduct was occasionally lukewarm and wavering, and only roused to vigour and resolution by the manly and repeated representations of Mr. Walpole.

It would be unjust to the merits of Mr. Walpole, to withhold the eulogium of the duke of Newcastle towards the conclusion of the Hanover treaty: "I am now to congratulate your ex-

cellency upon this great work's being brought so near a conclusion, which his majesty cannot but look upon to be as good as finished: and I cannot but take a sensible pleasure in the great share your excellency has had in it. Your diligence and prudent conduct, and your great abilities, in executing the several commands you have received from his majesty, upon this subject, have been taken notice of by the king, and which I cannot forbear, now we are so near seeing the happy effects of them, mentioning to your excellency, in the manner that so important and so acceptable a service deserves *."

Mr. Walpole was principally indebted for his success to the influence of Fleury, whose predominance in the French cabinet he duly appreciated. Impressed with full conviction, that the duke of Bourbon owed his office to Fleury, and held it only by his forbearance, he resisted the solicitations of the British cabinet to be more assiduous in his court to the ladies who were supposed to govern the duke of Bourbon, from just apprehensions of being drawn into their cabals, and of offending his venerable friend. The dispatches of the British embassador justify his motives, and contain too many instances of Fleury's ascendancy to be enumerated: one anecdote, however, which he records in a letter to

* The duke of Newcastle to Mr. Walpole, Sept. 26, 1724.

lord Townshend, Jan. 13, 1734, is too curious to be withheld from the reader:

"The duke of Bourbon is indefatigable in his application to gain the young king's confidence; but he finds Frejus has the first and strongest hold there, insomuch that when his highness seeks proper opportunities to talk to his majesty alone, as soon as he begins to be serious, the child diverts the discourse of business by idle actions and ordinary chit-chat, until Frejus, whom he never fails to call for, can have notice or time to enter the room, which goes to the duke of Bourbon's heart, as not knowing what to do, being justly apprehensive that should he endeavour the removal of the bishop he would fail in the attempt."

Soon after the conclusion of the treaty of Hanover, an incident happened at Versailles, which justified the sagacity of Mr. Walpole, and of which he transmitted an interesting account to lord Townshend:

"My Lord, Paris, Dec. 24, 1725.

"On Tuesday the 18th instant, being the day of the week on which the foreign ministers go to Versailles, to make their court to their most christian majesties, and to have their audiences of the ministers, Frejus, notwithstanding he had invited some company to dine with him, and notwithstanding the most tempestuous weather

of wind and rain that ever was known, went early in the morning to his country-house at Issy, near Meudon, about an hour's distance from Versailles, having left word at his lodging that he should not return that night. These circumstances of his sudden departure, joined with others, which some assiduous courtiers had observed the night before, and particularly that of his most christian majesty, the queen and M. le Duc being locked up a considerable time together in the queen's closet, occasioned a general whisper of the bishop's being retired altogether from business; but his return early the next morning to Versailles, and appearing at the king's levee, as usual, soon put an end to that report, though not without some speculation of what might have been the motive of so quick a departure, as well as return to court; of which I am able to give your lordship a full and true account. But before I do it, I beg leave to trouble you with the situation of the court since the first arrival of the queen at Fontainebleau.

"Your lordship doth not want to be informed, that ever since M. le Duc's administration, madame de Prie and M. du Verney have had the chief credit and confidence with his highness in the management of affairs; while bishop Frejus, more immediately attached to the personal care

and service of the French king, and seeking no other favour and support, spoke his mind in council as became a minister of State, and to M. le Duc in private, not as a flatterer, but as it became a friend. Although his highness did at times, by the instigation of others, entertain some uneasiness and jealousy of the bishop with respect to power, yet the candid behaviour of M. Frejus, entirely void of ambition or self-interest, immediately set all matters right again, and in the meantime they continued to live and act together with a perfect understanding. The bishop assumed no other part of the administration than that of giving his advice in matters of state and moment, which was generally so reasonable and just, that as M. le Duc reaped great advantage from it, so he appeared well satisfied and pleased with it. Thus things continued to go smoothly on until the marriage of the French king.

"The disappointment of having a princess of England to be queen of France, and no suitable match, for birth or religion, immediately occurring, at a time when the French nation expressed the greatest impatience to have their king married, madame de Prie and M. du Verney, under the authority and credit of M. le Duc, turned their thoughts to find out a person, who, by the great obligation she should have from such an

unexpected honour, would become entirely attached to the interest of those who were most instrumental to procure it. Nobody's situation seemed more proper to answer that end than that of king Stanislaus's daughter, and in all likelihood it was as easy to obtain from her such assurances and conditions of attachment and friendship, as it was to get her consent to the marriage. In the mean time bishop Frejus appeared purely indifferent and passive in this affair, not being willing, perhaps, on one side to dissuade the king, his master, from marrying at a time when the whole French nation cried aloud for it, nor on the other to recommend a person to him who, by the inequality of her age, as well as of other circumstances, might some time or other prove not so agreeable to him.

" However sensible the queen might be of their merit who had the chief hand in making her so, it was generally thought that her gratitude would have extended no further than to the person of M. le Duc; that the character of madame de Prie and M. du Verney, so notorious for intrigues of all sorts, could not be unknown to her; and that she would naturally reflect how dangerous it might be, considering the difference of her age and beauty from that of the king, to strengthen and support the interest of those who would not fail to fling in the

French king's way, and promote the first pleasurable views, however disagreeable they might be to the queen, that his majesty might shew the least inclination for. On the other hand, the known probity and virtue of bishop Frejus would have disposed her to seek and cultivate a particular friendship and intimacy with him, whose principles, as well as immediate confidence and credit with the young king, might make him both willing and able to cement a mutual affection between their majesties, and secure the queen from any apprehensions of a rival. This was so sensible and obvious a part, with regard to her own interest, that it was scarce to be doubted but she would readily embrace it; and the bishop's station in being her first *aumonier* would not fail of giving her an opportunity to do it whenever she pleased.

" Upon her majesty's arrival at court, either all the persons that could possibly have the least approach by their place to the queen, were entirely gained by madame de Prie, or the avenues of access to the queen were so guarded that none but that lady's devoted creatures could come near her majesty, without being immediately interrupted; at which she herself pretended to be uneasy, and to complain that she was encompassed and besieged on every side. Having continued a long time without taking the least

notice of bishop Frejus, scarce showing common civility, she gave some of his friends to understand that she detested madame de Prie, that she had the greatest veneration for him, and was desirous of his friendship; but begged he would have patience, not knowing which way to turn herself for fear of madame de Prie, and, through her, of disobliging M. le Duc, to whom she was so much obliged, and who was so very powerful.

" In the meantime, the bishop continued to go on, in his old way, as preceptor and minister of State, in waiting upon and advising his majesty alone, at the usual hours, and in constantly attending at the times appointed for M. le Duc to do business with the king, without being wanting in due respect to her majesty, and without pressing a more particular intimacy and friendship with her, until she should think fit to give him sufficient encouragement to do it; he being, in his temper, by no means a sycophant or courtier, to press himself forward before he was sure of an agreeable reception. To such of his friends as did exhort him to make his approaches to the queen, he would say, that they did not know the situation of things at court; and he has often told me, that notwithstanding her private intimations to him, of being his friend, he was sure that she was entirely deli-

vered up into the power of madame de Prie, and M. du Verney, by the means of M. le Duc, who had of late more than ever put himself under the absolute government of those two persons, notwithstanding the general murmur of the whole court and nation against them.

"The bishop was the only person of consequence that durst boldly and openly oppose their formidable power, which he has done, not only to his friends, but also to the king, and even to M. le Duc himself; declaring freely to his highness, that he looked upon madame de Prie, and M. du Verney, as enemies to the State, and as authors of all the disorders, weakness, and confusion, both in the finances and other matters, that disgraced the present administration; and that as his honour and conscience obliged him to speak so plainly to him on this subject, so the reputation and credit of his highness should oblige him to free himself from the slavery and influence of such evil counsellors. But the bishop preached on this text in vain; for M. le Duc being immoveably fixed in his attachment to those two persons, constantly took their part, and to such a degree that he and the bishop have often come to very high words on the subject. I have learnt from the bishop, that his highness lately told him, he valued his honour and conscience as much as

the bishop did his, and for that reason he would support those that would risk their all, and even their lives for him; and if madame de Prie and M. du Verney must perish, he would perish with them.

"This was bringing matters to a very close point. The bishop had certainly not the least thought of breaking with M. le Duc, or of endeavouring to displace him; not knowing whom to put so conveniently in his room, and being firmly determined not to take upon himself the weight of the administration. He was also sensible, perhaps, that he should have a difficulty in doing it with the French king himself, to whom M. le Duc is certainly become agreeable enough, by the good offices first of M. Frejus, and by an habitual attendance upon his majesty, taking care never to thwart, but constantly to entertain and humour the king, in all his little pleasures of hunting from place to place. These considerations, I believe, made the bishop decline to push matters to an extremity with regard to madame de Prie and M. du Verney, continuing still in the same sentiments and discourse on their account as occasion offered. And as they could not be ignorant of his inveterate animosity against them, and that it was impossible to bring him to a good opinion of them, which M. le Duc had often endeavoured

to do, but in vain, it was natural for them, being both of a bold and enterprising spirit, to turn their thoughts how to get rid of the bishop. But a stroke so desperate, and an attempt so dangerous to themselves, made it impossible to conceive which way they could undertake it.

"I am here to acquaint your lordship, that although the candid and disinterested behaviour of the bishop towards M. le Duc was a sufficient proof of his having no design of being prime minister himself; yet the privilege he enjoyed of working alone with the king, without the presence of the duke, and being always present when his highness should work with his majesty, was represented by madame de Prie and M. du Verney as such an encroachment upon the authority of his highness, as prime minister, as to have made a strong impression upon him; and he has for a long time had it so much at heart, that he has often endeavoured by himself, and by the insinuations of some friends, to prevail with the bishop to consent that his highness might sometimes do business alone with the French king. But M. Frejus would never give up this point, saying that he had his majesty's positive command to be always by when M. le Duc had any business to do with him, wherein his highness was obliged to acquiesce, but never was perfectly easy in this matter.

"The last year, when the king was at Chantilly, and the bishop went for two days to Liancourt, the duke waited at the usual hour upon his majesty with his portefeuille, in order to work with him in the absence of M. Frejus; but he could not prevail with his majesty to do it, who said he would stay till M. Frejus came home. His highness modestly replied, he did not desire to do any business of moment; but there was some papers, which, though of no great consequence, yet by the nature of them required an immediate dispatch, and begged his majesty only to sign them; but the king said it would be time enough when the bishop came back. This strong decision, in favour of the bishop, made it evident how vain a second attempt of this nature would be; and therefore all jealousy and dispute about it seemed quite over, until the arrival of the queen.

"Her majesty, being entirely beset by the creatures of madame de Prie, being, out of gratitude and inclination, much attached to the interest of M. le Duc, and either not daring to cultivate a friendship with the bishop, for fear of disobliging his highness, or not desiring to do it, on account of several little stories insinuated to the disadvantage of the bishop, as if he was her enemy; and lastly, perhaps, being made to believe that she had absolutely gained

the heart and affection of the king, was earnestly solicited to join her interest to prevail with his majesty to work alone with M. le Duc; to which, though as it is said with much reluctancy, she consented at last, and this was the reason of the bishop's retiring to his country-house, on Tuesday last, occasioned in the following manner.

"On Monday, in the evening, as soon as her majesty had notice of the king's return from hunting, she quitted her cards, and desired to speak with him in her closet; being about an hour before the usual time for the bishop's seeing him alone. The queen took that opportunity, in the presence of M. le Duc, to press him most earnestly, and in the most insinuating and flattering ways imaginable, to do business with M. le Duc alone, that night; which he by no means would consent to, notwithstanding her repeated instances for above an hour, when his majesty said he must take his leave, and go to the bishop. But before he went out of the room, she made him promise to return soon to her again. Being come to his own apartment, where he found the bishop, the king gave him an account of all that had passed with the queen, telling him positively, that he was resolved not to work with M. le Duc alone, nor return to the queen's lodgings. M. Frejus

desired him, since he had given his word, to go back again to the queen, that if his majesty was fully determined not to do business with M. le Duc alone, the best way was to send for him to come. The king said, No, stay you here in the closet, and I will return to you again immediately.

" The conversation between the king and the bishop lasted on this occasion above an hour and a quarter, before the bishop could prevail with him to return to the queen; but being gone, and the bishop having staid in his majesty's closet above an hour, without hearing any thing of him, he took it for granted that the queen and M. le Duc had prevailed with his majesty to do business with his highness in his absence, and therefore he returned to his lodging, and took no further notice of the matter that night. But early the next morning, having wrote a letter to his majesty, to acquaint him with the reason of his retirement, and beseeching him in a proper manner to dispense with his future service and attendance upon him; and likewise another to M. le Duc, for obtaining his majesty's pardon and consent for his leaving altogether the court, he went to his country-house at Issy.

" His majesty was gone a hunting that morning, before the receipt of the bishop's letter;

and immediately upon his return home in the afternoon, the queen having desired to speak with him, acquainted him that the bishop was gone to his country-house. His majesty replied, But I suppose to return again this evening? The queen having thereupon answered, No, she believed not, the king said nothing; but, with the greatest appearance of concern in his countenance, suddenly left the room, and went to his own closet, where, to avoid company coming to him, he retired to his *garderobe*, and set himself upon the close-stool, in a very sullen and melancholy posture. The duke of Montemar, lord of the bedchamber in waiting, was the only person that came near him, to see if he wanted any thing; and having waited some time, without his majesty saying any thing to him, the duke himself ventured to say, *Sire, M. de Frejus est parti pour la campagne, tant pis pour votre majesté, et pour l'état.* The king made no reply; but having soon after got up to return to his closet, he called to the duke of Montemar, and said, *Allez incessamment chez M. le Duc, et dites luy, que je luy ordonne d'ecrire sur le champ à M. Frejus, que je l'attends demain à mon levée.* Whereupon the duke said, *L'ordonnez-vous, Sire?* The king replied, *Ouy, je l'ordonne.* The duke went and delivered his majesty's command to his highness, who sent an express that night to

the bishop; and he accordingly waited upon his majesty the next morning at his levée. It is said that nothing could equal the concern and uneasiness that his majesty shewed at the bishop's absence, except it be the pleasure and satisfaction which appeared in his countenance upon the bishop's return next morning.

"This is the best account, my lord, I can get of this extraordinary incident, which during the time that it lasted, employed the attention and reflections of every body, both native and foreigner, the whole court and town taking the bishop's part, excepting his particular friends, who thought that his departure, without being first apprised of the king's behaviour, was too hasty and precipitate, and might have given to his enemies a great advantage over him. M. le Duc has thought fit to take the turn of wondering extremely at the bishop's going away, without the least reason or provocation; and he began the letter he wrote by the king's command, to M. Frejus, by expressing his own surprise at his absence. I having had an audience, on Saturday, of his highness, to talk with him about the king of Sardinia's accession to the treaty of Hanover; and finding him very gracious, took an opportunity, as I was going away, to tell him I hoped that all the noise about divisions at court was over, begging his pardon for touch-

ing upon so nice a subject, which was no concern of mine, any otherwise than as the strict friendship and union betwixt the two crowns would make me sorry if any thing should happen that might disturb or weaken the administration here. He very obligingly said, 'To you I will speak plain on this matter,' which is the most ridiculous thing that ever happened; and my friend the bishop, as I have since told him, said his highness, had he been a child, deserved to be whipped. Had he said the least word to me, nothing of this nature would have been; for he had no reason in the world to go away. M. Frejus and I, continued he, have always been very good friends. I do not doubt but we shall always continue so; though I am very sensible of the endeavours of some to divide us, if possible; but they will not be able to have their end.'

"I will not conceal from your lordship that the bishop's country-house being directly in my way from Versailles to Paris, I stopt in my chaise at the end of the village, at my return from court that Tuesday, and sent my servant to inquire how the bishop did; resolving, in case he gave me any encouragement, to have made him a visit, and to have exhorted him to return to court if possible; being persuaded, should he retire from business at this juncture, that

things would go into the greatest confusion here, and have a dangerous influence on the foreign affairs. He returned me a civil compliment of thanks, and said he hoped that he should see me in two or three days, and very early next morning he sent his secretary to me to acquaint me that he was setting out to return to court. I did not think proper to wait upon him at Versailles, until Saturday last, and then I took care to see M. le Duc and M. de Morville first.

"It is impossible for me to express the obliging manner in which the bishop received me, *full of acknowledgment for that mark of my friendship in calling upon him in that doubtful day of his retirement;* and I hope his majesty will not be displeased at my having taken this step, which honour and gratitude, for his constant behaviour towards me, called upon me to take, whatever his fate might have been, which I am persuaded he will never forget."

The observation of Mr. Walpole that Fleury never would forget his visit, was verified by the event; and their intimacy was strengthened by this mark of regard. The deference of Fleury to the English embassador gave umbrage to the French party, who were adverse to the union with England. Montgon says, that Mr. Walpole had subjugated Fleury, and calls them two

fingers of the same hand; marshal Villars also, and the duc de St. Simon * made the most urgent remonstrances to Fleury on his subserviency to the English ambassador, but without effect.

* St. Simon speaking of this visit of Mr. Walpole, says, "M. de Frejus fut si touché de la demarche de ce rusé Anglois dans cette crise, qu'il le crut son ami intime." * * * * * "Il s'abandonna entierement aux Anglois avec une dependance, qui sautoit aux yeux de tout le monde. Je resolus enfin de lui en parler. * * * Sur sa confiance en Walpole, en son frere, et aux Anglois dominans il se mit a sourire. Vous ne savez pas tout, me repondoit-il: savez-vous bien ce qu' Horace a fait pour moi? et me fit valoir cette visite, comme un trait heroique d'attachement et d'amitié qui levoit pour toujours tout scrupule." St. Simon, tom. x.

CHAPTER II.

1726.

Mr. Walpole supports the Treaty of Hanover in Parliament—Deaths of his Sister Lady Townshend and of his Brother Galfridus—Transactions of the allies of Hanover and Vienna—Reciprocal Preparations for War—Mr. Walpole's return to Paris—Divided State of the French Ministry—False Suspicions of Intrigues between Fleury and the Court of Spain—Fall of Ripperda.

MR. WALPOLE had continued at Paris from his first arrival in October 1723, to the end of 1725, engaged in the most arduous affairs, with only the intermission of two months in the spring of 1724, which he obtained with the greatest difficulty. At this period his presence became necessary in London, to explain the real state and intentions of the French cabinet, to assist in arranging the complicated business arising from the late negotiations, and to defend the treaty of Hanover, to which much opposition was expected, both by his writings and in parliament.

The affairs of England were, in the interim, committed to his confidential secretary, Mr. Robinson, whom he mentions in the highest terms of esteem and affection; who, during his short absence, had displayed great prudence and

sagacity in treating with the French ministers, and acquired the full confidence of Fleury.

On his arrival in London, in January 1726, Mr. Walpole found the ministry embarrassed with the wavering conduct of the king of Prussia, and the kingdom threatened with invasion, from the united forces of Spain, Russia, and the Emperor. He found the opposition strengthened by the recent accession of the Pulteneys, and the different parties united into a compact body, by the address of Bolingbroke.

The parliament was opened on the 20th of January; and the treaties of Vienna and Hanover were laid before the Commons, on the 9th of February, by Sir Robert Walpole. Being taken into consideration on the 16th, Mr. Walpole opened the debate with a long and well arranged speech. After perspicuously detailing the history of the treaties, from the peace of Utrecht to the conclusion of the treaty of Vienna, he defended with great abilities the motives and conduct of the king, in contracting the treaty of Hanover. He laid open the ambitious designs of the courts of Madrid and Vienna, and developed their views and engagements hostile to the commerce and interests of England, in contradiction to existing alliances.

He added, "His majesty, ever watchful for the interest of his British subjects, had caused

lively representations to be made, both to the emperor and Spain. At the court of Madrid those complaints were received with coldness, at the court of Vienna with haughtiness; the imperial ministry did not scruple to insinuate, that if the king persisted in his resolution to take measures in opposition to the treaty of Vienna, the emperor would not only think himself disengaged from the guaranty of the protestant succession to the crown of Great Britain; but that such conduct might be attended with serious consequences, in relation to his majesty's dominions in Germany. These insulting menaces made no impression on his majesty's firmness, nor deterred him from concerting, with other powers, such measures as might check the ambitious views of those who endeavoured to render themselves formidable."

He then dwelt on the attempts of Spain to conclude a marriage between don Carlos and an arch-duchess, and expatiated on the danger of such a match, which at a future period might unite the Spanish and Austrian dominions under the same monarch. He concluded with declaring, that "the main view of the treaty of Hanover was to maintain the public repose and tranquillity of christendom, and secure to each contracting party the possession of their respective dominions, with the rights, immunities, and

advantages, particularly those relating to trade, which their subjects enjoyed, or ought by treaties to enjoy."

This speech was ably answered by Mr. Daniel Pulteney, who urged, that the subject was of too great importance for a precipitate decision; and by Shippen, on the plea that the treaty would engage the nation in a war, in defence of the king's dominions in Germany, contrary to the act of succession. These objections were refuted by Mr. Pelham; and an address moved by him, expressing the resolution of the house to support the king "against all insults and attacks upon any of his territories and dominions, though not belonging to the crown of Great Britain," was carried by 285 against 107.*

This triumphant majority decided the fate of the treaty, and the session was closed on the 24th of May.

During Mr. Walpole's continuance in England, he experienced a domestic misfortune by the decease of his sister, lady Townshend, who died of the small-pox, on the 29th of March. This elegant and accomplished woman was a severe loss to her husband and family. She greatly contributed, by her engaging manners,

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, ch. 29. Chandler. Tindal, vol. ix. p. 543 and seq.

to enliven the fatigue of business, in which lord Townshend was involved. Though educated in the country, and unaccustomed, till her marriage, to the manners of a court, she soon acquired great ease and address; and when she accompanied her husband to Hanover, "gave," as lord Waldegrave expresses himself in a letter to Mr. Walpole, "with so much good humour, into the ways of the country, that she pleased every body to admiration*." Her death was the greatest misfortune at this critical juncture, on account of the growing misunderstanding between lord Townshend and Sir Robert Walpole†, which her influence over her husband and brother had greatly contributed to diminish. She died in the 40th year of her age, "generally and justly lamented for her uncommon merit, and the accomplishments that adorned her mind as well as her person‡."

In the month of August, Mr. Walpole suffered another domestic loss by the death of his brother Galfridus, who had entered at an early period into the naval service, and highly distinguished himself in the reign of queen Anne. He was promoted to the command of the Lion, a third-rate man of war, and in a severe action

* Hanover, December 19, 1725. Waldegrave Papers.

† Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chapter 30.

‡ Political State for March 1725-6.

with the French, lost his right arm by a cannon-ball. Soon after the accession of George the First, he sat in parliament for the borough of Lestwithiel, was nominated treasurer of Greenwich hospital, and in 1721 appointed joint post-master general.

The treaties of Vienna and Hanover divided the views and occupied the attention of Europe. The courts of Vienna and Madrid prepared to carry their gigantic projects into execution. Spain disdainfully rejected all the overtures of the duke of Bourbon to pacify her resentment for the dismission of the infanta, and laboured to realise the vast but incoherent plans of Ripperda. Philip publicly received the duke of Wharton as the accredited agent of the pretender, countenanced the plans of the duke of Liria for the invasion of England, treated Mr. Stanhope as a proscribed minister, engaged officers for the service of the pretender, and sent a large body of troops into Gallicia, apparently to attack France, or invade England. He also made large remittances to the emperor, and promised additional subsidies on the arrival of the galleons from America.

The emperor, on his part, was no less active; he gained the electors of Treves, Bavaria, Cologne, Mentz, and Palatine; he had nearly succeeded in detaching the king of Prussia from

the treaty of Hanover, and meditated to arm the northern powers against England. Catherine maintained a predominant party in Sweden and Denmark, and, assisted by the golden showers of Spain, prepared to co-operate in the invasion of England, which was to be attempted at the same time from the coasts of Russia and Norway, Flanders and Spain. With this view the emperor and Spain projected the establishment of a military force of 240,000 men, exclusive of the Russian and electoral troops.

The spirited resolutions of parliament, to defend the king's dominions in Germany, as well as Great Britain, were supported by equal vigour in the ministry, to gain new accessions to the treaty of Hanover, and to repel the hostile aggressions of Spain and the emperor. Vast preparations were made by sea; Admiral Hosier was sent with a powerful squadron to blockade Porto Bello, and prevent the return of the galleons, which were to convey from the new world the annual treasures of Spain. Sir Charles Wager, with another squadron, sailed to the Baltic to check the hostile attempts of the czarina, and secure the co-operation of Sweden and Denmark; while Sir John Jennings, having on board a large body of land forces, cruized off the coast of Spain.

Such being the general state of affairs, the

great object of the British cabinet was to keep France steady to her engagements, notwithstanding her earnest desire of a reconciliation with Spain; to infuse vigour into her counsels, and, with her concurrence, to overcome the Russian party in Sweden, to form a convention with Denmark, and detach the German princes from their alliance with the emperor. With this object in view Mr. Walpole returned to Paris on the 14th of May, and found the French cabinet in a sad state of weakness and disunion.

The king was indifferent to affairs, solely occupied with hunting and his visits to Rambouillet*, estranged from the queen, to whom he did not even speak for three months after the retreat of Fleury, and having no will but that of his preceptor.

The duke of Bourbon was absolutely governed by madame de Prie and Paris du Verney; he was disgusted with the bishop's predominant influence, anxious to obtain a reconciliation with Spain, yet desirous to preserve the union with England, through a dread of the vengeance of Philip; therefore timid, wavering, and averse to the adoption of vigorous measures.

Morville, though friendly to England, and

* The seat of the count of Thoulouse, natural son of Louis the Fourteenth.

easy of access to the British minister, was jealous of Fleury, and caballed with the duke of Bourbon. "His knowledge of foreign affairs," to use the expressions of Mr. Walpole, "was very scanty, upon entering into business; and his genius was naturally so narrow, that there was no great prospect that time and experience would ever make him a considerable man, or any thing more than a clerk to receive and execute orders, even in which he was not so expeditious as could be wished. And although he loved the appearance and credit of doing every thing himself; yet he would readily submit to the opinion of him, who had the chief power and authority in the government*.

Marshal Villars was attached to the duke of Bourbon, to whom he solely owed his introduction into the council of state. Though grossly illiterate, and ignorant of foreign affairs, his vanity led him to consider himself as great a statesman as a warrior. Servile in his flattery, though affecting independence, he had no real influence; and his increasing age and infirmities rendered him a mere cypher.

The duke of Orleans, as presumptive heir to the crown, had a seat in the council of state. Though a prince of the strictest virtue and

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, Sept. 28, 1726.

morality, he was minute and superstitious in the forms of religion, and ill calculated for business. His capacity was slow, and he had not made that progress in the knowledge of affairs which was expected from his high station, age, and experience. From animosity to the duke of Bourbon, he was inclined to oppose his views; and indiscreetly, though innocently, communicated to his wife * the secrets of State, which were transmitted through her family to the emperor.

Fleury was the soul of the French cabinet; though personally attached to Mr. Walpole, and friendly to the union of the two crowns, as far as was consistent with the interest of his country, he had been recently suspected of entertaining a secret correspondence with Spain, and countenancing the cabals of the jacobites. During the absence of Mr. Walpole, a letter from the abbot Montgon to Morville, containing vague communications on this subject, which was transmitted by Mr. Stanhope, filled Mr. Robinson with surprise and alarm. Adopting, however, the prepossession of Mr. Walpole in favour of Fleury, he waited on the bishop late in the evening, and with great caution and address communicated the intelligence. Hav-

* Maria Jane, daughter of Louis William, margrave of Baden, whom he espoused in 1724; she died in August 1726.

ing hinted that, in a discourse with Mr. Stanhope, Ripperda mentioned a negotiation at Madrid, and a proposal recently made for reconciling the two crowns, unknown to M. le Duc, and managed by some persons of the first distinction in France. "I was agreeably surprised," continues Mr. Robinson, "agreeably to my own wishes and thoughts of the affair, by the bishop's interrupting me with a smile, and that unaffected openness in his countenance, and saying, 'Am I not the person? Am I not the man of distinction in France who am to have the honour of reconciling the two crowns, and obliging M. le Duc to go throw himself at his catholic majesty's feet, and beg pardon? We have had the news here, post after post, and M. le Duc is acquainted with all my ill offices.'" On insinuating further intimations from Ripperda, of Fleury's proposal, in conjunction with the duke of Orleans, for displacing the duke of Bourbon, inducing the king of France to accede to the treaty of Vienna, and for setting the pretender on the throne; "The bishop," adds Mr. Robinson, "continued his gaiety and laughing at Ripperda, and the thin artifice he used to throw jealousies and intestine divisions into this court, which he said was the last effort of Spain, after that minister had found his attempt baffled, to give a diffidence of France to

England." He added, "Ripperda is ill-informed of the situation of this court, to imagine me capable of entering into any design to displace M. le Duc, much more to have recourse to Spain and him for that purpose. My intentions and sentiments, with relation to the pretender, are too well known. I have too true a knowledge of the interests of my country and king to precipitate his majesty into measures so pernicious to France as to think of abandoning the king of England's friendship.

"But I need not trouble you with these reflections; I am accountable to nobody but the king for my actions. I see you are concerned lest these calumnies should do me an injury. I thank you for your confidence; it is kindly done; but I have been a long time acquainted with this Montgon's suspicions. It is a poor credulous creature; but God knows what he would be at. I never thought it worth while to trouble Mr. Walpole with these accounts of myself; I despised them; acquitted myself to the king. Surely any thing so personal to myself was not worth mentioning. However, once for all, I protest solemnly to you, and (lifting up his eyes and hands) I protest before God, that I have no correspondence directly or indirectly, in Spain, with any one person whatever."

At the bishop's instances, Mr. Robinson car-

ried the letter to Morville, who laughed at these vague insinuations, made a warm eulogium of Fleury, and offered to forfeit his own life if there was the least truth in that part of the calumny which related to him. The duke of Bourbon, with whom Mr. Robinson had an interview on this subject, treated the letter as an artifice of Ripperda, and solemnly disclaimed any intention of effecting a reconciliation with Spain, but through the mediation of England. He strongly vindicated Fleury; declared that they both acted for the same service, and upon the same principles; and, drawing his hand across his throat, said, "I will answer with my head for the bishop's fidelity *."

The suspicions of the British ministry were for a time allayed by this circumstantial and candid account. The artifices of Ripperda, and the origin of these absurd insinuations, were afterwards satisfactorily explained by Morville to Mr. Walpole, and justly attributed to the officious interference of Montgon, and to the credulity of Stalpart and Sartine, the agents of France at the court of Madrid.

Soon after his return to his embassy, the attention of Mr. Walpole was occupied by the accounts transmitted from Madrid, of the fall of

* Mr. Robinson to the duke of Newcastle, Paris, March 13, 1726.

Ripperda; of his taking refuge in the house of Mr. Stanhope; and disclosing the secret transactions between Spain and the emperor *. The earliest intelligence of these extraordinary events was communicated in a letter, dated the 18th of May, from count Konigseg, the imperial embassador at Madrid, to Fonseca, the imperial minister at Paris. Mr. Walpole received the first hint from the Bavarian minister, on the 31st of May, and on the 3d of June a confirmation of the account from Morville and Fleury, which Fonseca had just imparted to them. The imperial minister, in making the communication, expressed his regret at what happened; hoped the French court would not increase the flame, by adding oil to it; and apologised for the emperor, in having negotiated with such a wretch as Ripperda. The French ministers highly applauded the dexterity and prudence of Mr. Stanhope, and seemed pleased at the hopes of obtaining a full knowledge of the secret negotiations between the courts of Vienna and Madrid. They at the same time expressed their doubts whether Philip had violated the rights of nations by

* The reader is referred to the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole for an account of the rise, administration, and fall of Ripperda; and for the letters of Mr. Stanhope, Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chapter 35, and Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 572, 622.

forcing Ripperda out of Mr. Stanhope's house, urged Mr. Walpole to moderate the resentment of his master, and anxiously deprecated a rupture with Spain.

On the 9th an account from Mr. Stanhope, which was delayed by the arrest of his courier at Victoria, reached Paris; and Mr. Walpole, the following day, imparted the intelligence to Fleury at Versailles. In this interview, which was short, and frequently interrupted, Mr. Walpole was struck with a remarkable expression, uttered by the bishop in the heat of conversation; "The reign of first ministers is but short!" which seemed to announce an approaching change in the administration of France.

CHAPTER 12.

1726.

Dismission of the Duke of Bourbon — Correspondence of Mr. Walpole on that Subject — Conference with Fleury.

THE surprise excited by the disgrace of Ripperda was soon obliterated by an unexpected event of still greater importance, the dismission of the duke of Bourbon.

The recal of Fleury having ensured his triumph over the duke of Bourbon, and riveted the affections of the king beyond controul, he resolved to obtain the dismission of madame de Prie and Paris du Verney. After ineffectual attempts to induce the duke of Bourbon to sacrifice his mistress and his confidant, he had a long audience of the queen, and urged her majesty to remove those persons who disgraced her household. "What antipathy," said the queen, "causes you to make such strong representations for their dismission?" "I have no antipathy," replied the bishop, "and the sole motive of my repeated exhortations to the duke of Bourbon is the dishonour which they entail on his character and administration." "But how can I," rejoined the queen, "dismiss these persons from my household, who have been proved guilty

of no crime, and only desire that their conduct may be scrutinised? I will freely own that the disgrace of persons with whose services I am satisfied, will displease me." The bishop made no answer; and when the queen hinted at the change of the king's affections, he replied, "I am not to blame." She then represented to him the chagrin of the duke of Bourbon at the king's refusal to admit him to a private audience, and solicited his interposition, but in vain *.

The duke of Bourbon was naturally dissatisfied with continuing at the helm of affairs as a mere deputy to Fleury; but, aware of the bishop's ascendancy, concealed his disgust, and affected to express the highest esteem and confidence in his co-adjutor. He even seemed to pay some deference to the repeated exhortations of Fleury; Madame de Prie made a journey to her country-house in Normandy; Paris du Verney appeared seldom at Versailles, and an important transaction of finance took place without his knowledge. Alarmed at this neglect, du Verney summoned madame de Prie from Normandy: she unexpectedly arrived at court on the first of June; and du Verney again frequented, as usual, the board of finance, and reassumed his imperious language and haughty

* Memoires de Villars, tom. iii. p. 215.

manners *. They even made another attempt to obtain the disgrace of Fleury by means of the queen.

These efforts accelerated the catastrophe; and the duke of Bourbon, aware that the struggle would probably end in his own disgrace, offered his resignation to the king in the presence of Fleury. This unexpected proposal embarrassed the young monarch, till Fleury said, "Will your majesty consent to the proposal of the duke, and not persuade him to continue in your service †?" The king, thus relieved from his uncertainty, requested the duke of Bourbon to continue at the helm of affairs, with expressions of kindness and satisfaction. A general persuasion, however, prevailed at court, that a change was meditating; and on the 10th of June, marshal Villars observed to the comptroller-general Dodun, "I see a storm ready to burst over the head of the duke of Bourbon." "I do not believe," replied Dodun, "that he will continue in office three months." "Nor I," rejoined Villars, "eight days." But on the following day Villars observing the dukes of Montemar and Charost, who were enemies of the duke, extremely cheerful, expressed his opinion

* Memoires de Richelieu, tom. iv.

† Memoires de Villars, tom. iii. p. 244; and Memoires de Montgon, tom. ii. p. 111.

to Dodun that the storm was approaching. His prediction was soon fulfilled: after the conclusion of the council, held in the presence of the duke of Bourbon, the king, before he departed for Rambouillet, at three, said to him, "I shall expect you in the evening; do not make me wait supper." The duke continued to do business with Breteuil and Dodun till eight; and going to his carriage, which was to convey him to Rambouillet, met the count de St. Florentin with his papers; but postponed the business till his return. At this instant the duke of Charost presented to him a letter from the king: "I command you, under pain of disobedience, to retire to Chantilly, and remain there until farther orders." The duke replied, "Accustomed to make the king obeyed, I shall be the first to set the example; but I expected, from the friendship of the king, and the earnest desire I have long shewn to retire, that my retreat would not have been attended with these marks of rigour." He instantly entered his chaise, accompanied by a lieutenant of the body guards, and drove to Chantilly, where he arrived at one o'clock in the morning.

Fleury announced to the queen the removal of the duke of Bourbon, and at the same time delivered to her a letter written in the king's own hand: "I entreat you, madam, and if neces-

sary, I command you, to do whatsoever the bishop of Frejus shall tell you, from me, as if it was told you by myself." In shewing this letter to marshal Villars, the queen burst into tears. The dismission of the duke of Bourbon was followed by the exile of Paris du Verney and his three brothers, and madame de Prie* had orders to retire into Normandy.

At three o'clock in the morning, Mr. Walpole was awakened by a messenger with a letter from Fleury:

"Monsieur†, Ce 11 Juin, à cinq heures.

"J'ay été tenté souvent de reveler à votre excellence ce qui vient de se passer; mais je n'etois pas maître du secret du roy, et mes ordres etoient trop exprès pour les violer. Sa majesté supprime la charge de premier ministre, et M. le Duc a ordre de se retirer à Chantilly. Je ne doute pas qu'il n'obeisse, et j'ay l'honneur de vous l'ecrire

* She survived her disgrace a little more than a year, and died of chagrin for the loss of her power, at the age of twenty-nine, in October 1727. According to the Memoirs of Richelieu, she poisoned herself.

† "Sir, June 11, 5 o'clock.

"I have been often tempted to reveal to your excellency what has just happened; but I was not master of the king's secret, and my orders were too positive to be disobeyed. His majesty suppresses the office of first minister, and the duke of Bourbon is commanded to retire to Chantilly. I have no doubt but he will obey; and I have the honour to write this to you before-hand, because I shall have no time

à l'avance, parceque je n'en aurai pas le temps après. Votre excellence peut estre assurée, Monsieur, et je vous supplie d'assurer sa majesté Britannique que cet evenement ne changera rien dans les affaires et qu'elle trouvera la même fidelité et la même exactitude dans nos traités reciproques. Je ne puis dans ce moment que lui protester le respect avec lequel je suis, Monsieur,

" de V. Exce
" le très humble et très
" obeissant serviteur,
" A. H. anc. ev. de Frejus.

" Mardi, à cinq heures du soir."

This note Mr. Walpole instantly transmitted to the duke of Newcastle, in a letter dated June 12, three o'clock in the morning:

" I have the honour to send your grace, inclosed, by express, the copy of a letter, which, though dated at 5 o'clock in the evening, I received but this moment from bishop Frejus, by a servant of his, who caused me to be waked on purpose to have it given into my own hands; by which your grace will see that the office of

after. Your excellency may be assured, and I entreat you, sir, to assure his Britannic majesty, that this event will make no change in affairs, and that he will experience the same fidelity and the same punctuality in fulfilling our reciprocal treaties. At this moment I have only time to declare the respect with which I am, Sir, &c.

" Tuesday, 5 in the evening."

prime minister is suppressed, and that M. le Duc has orders to retire to Chantilly, which, I do not doubt, will be a surprising piece of news to his majesty, having received no intimation of it any sooner. I should indeed, had not this midnight message prevented me, have given your grace, by the messenger that carries this, some account of some particulars that have lately occurred to me, which gave me reason to suspect that something of this nature might happen, though not so suddenly; and that from some discourse I have lately had with the bishop, and more particularly from what he said to me, even yesterday at Versailles. For my friend, Mr. Gedda, hinted to me some days since, in great confidence, that the queen had let count Tarlo know (who came hither about ten days ago) that M. le Duc had pressed her to speak to the king to decide who should have the authority of prime minister, his highness or bishop Frejus; and insinuated to her to do it in such a manner if she could, as might determine his majesty in favour of his highness. But she was too sensible of the hazard she had formerly run of the king's displeasure, who did not speak to her for three months (as the bishop himself lately told me) after the queen had taken part in favour of M. le Duc against him, and he had retired to his country-house before Christmas. This con-

sideration determined her, by the advice of count Tarlo, to let M. le Duc know that she could not venture to engage herself against bishop Frejus; but if any attempt was made against M. le Duc, she would oppose it; and that if she knew where the dispute lay, she would endeavour to accommodate matters betwixt them. She gave the same answer to madame de Prie, who being newly come out of the country, had earnestly talked to her majesty to the same purpose.

"This intelligence, with other advices, (though not from good hands,) that the king's frequent journies to Rambouillet would prove prejudicial to M. le Duc; the countess of Thoulouse having got possession, by a natural way of talking, agreeable to the humour of the king, to speak freely to his majesty of all things, and even against the administration of his highness, determined me, yesterday was se'nnight, to sound the bishop upon the situation of affairs betwixt him and M. le Duc, by which I easily perceived a great coldness with regard to his highness. The bishop freely owned to me that he was by no means pleased with M. le Duc's measures, with regard to their domestic matters, and particularly their finances; his highness being entirely delivered up to the pernicious counsels of madame de Prie and her creatures. As he let

fall to me some strong expressions, that the service of the king his master was what he preferred to all other considerations, and that he could not sit easy and see things go on in the manner they did, to the ruin of the State, which in a short time would be out of capacity to support itself, if other measures were not taken; I began at first to apprehend that he might think of retiring again from court; but, having sounded him on that head, he gave me his solemn promise and assurance that he had no such intentions. I then gently touched upon the French king having perhaps thoughts of making him prime minister; upon which he declared there was no such design, and that he would never take that weight upon him. However, I could still perceive there was something in his breast with regard to M. le Duc, which gave me occasion to intimate to him, that I did not see how his highness's place could be supplied, (unless the bishop himself would take it,) by another person, without hazard of greater inconveniences, and even to the bishop himself, all things considered. But I could get nothing else from him, besides that nobody else could be prime minister; continuing to shew, at the same time, a dissatisfaction against M. le Duc.

"I was since informed, that application had

been made, by some that are friends to the Orleans family, to count Tarlo, for engaging the queen to enter into a scheme for making the count de Thoulouse prime minister; which determined me to make use of that handle for discovering more fully the bishop's thoughts with regard to M. le Duc, and the administration, when I was at Versailles on Monday last. But I was so often interrupted when with the bishop, that I had only time to communicate to him Mr. Stanhope's account of what had happened with regard to Ripperda, at which time this remarkable expression fell from him, that the reign of first ministers was but short; but I had no opportunity of talking more to him on that subject then, at which I was the less concerned, because he had invited me to dine with him the next day, in company with the marshals d'Huxelles and Berwick.

"As I was alone with him yesterday, before dinner, I took an occasion to intimate to him the report I had heard that the count of Thoulouse was to be first minister. He not only gave me the strongest assurances to the contrary, but also represented to me the inconveniences that he was sensible would happen from thence. He let me know, at the same time, that the nation would be pleased to see the administration of affairs in the king's own hands,

with a council to assist him. I told him, that as I hoped I might venture to say that the king himself appeared to have no applications to business, nor any turn that way, I thought, by the nature of things, that however the authority might seem to be in his majesty's power only, yet there must be somebody who should have the particular confidence of the king, and to whom the principal resort and court should be made by the subjects, to prevent a confusion in business. "Yes," says he, "and so I think there must." From whence I inferred, that he meant himself; and as he said no more, I could not pretend to press him any farther upon this subject. But in taking my leave of the bishop at seven o'clock, he stopped short twice, as I was going out, as if he had something to say to me; and though I put the question to him, yet he let me go without speaking out."

This dispatch was soon followed by another, bearing date June 18th, (very private,) containing an account of his first conference with Fleury after this important event:

"I had the honour to send your grace yesterday morning, by Lyng the messenger, a copy of the letter bishop Frejus wrote to me in his own hand, to acquaint me with the removal of M. le Duc. I can now let you know, that I

having, in the answer I returned to thank him for that early communication, desired to wait upon him when he should think fit, he immediately sent me word that he should expect me with impatience this day to dine with him at Versailles; where I having accordingly been, I began the conference with expressing my grateful sense of this fresh instance of his confidence and friendship in the notice he had been pleased to give me of this new and extraordinary revolution at court; but I hoped at the same time, that he would suffer me to make use of the same amicable freedom, with which he had always indulged me, to let him know I could heartily have wished that he had extended his usual kindness and confidence to me so far as to have given me such early notice of this event, that I might have prepared his majesty and his ministers for it, for some important reasons, which, I must own, in some measure nearly affected me, and which, for want of such notice, would occasion, I was afraid, various reflections at our court. He desired me to speak my mind freely in every respect, and he hoped he should give me an entire satisfaction. I then continued my discourse to the following effect: 'Sir, you may remember that some time since, when I was in England, we received advices from Spain, that intrigues were certainly

carrying on at this court, in concert with that, by great men, with whom you was principally concerned, for the removal of M. le Duc; which made not the least impression on his majesty or his ministers, chiefly on account of the assurances I gave them at that time, of there being no foundation in it, from the knowledge I had of your character and sentiments. Since, there has been several reports of this nature which I have hinted to you, of your being in close concert with the duke of Orleans and the count de Thoulouse against M. le Duc, and that the journeys which his most christian majesty made to Rambouillet were contrived for that purpose: and I will now tell you, sir, what I never would do before for fear of making you uneasy, when I thought the thing entirely groundless, and therefore unnecessary, which was, that our constant advices from Vienna informed us that the imperial court depends upon your friendship, if M. le Duc was out of the way. I then added what Mr. Palm had lately said to Mr. Pozzobueno, of count Broglio's doing nothing but by order of the duke of Bourbon, and that the great stroke of éclat which would happen in France would be public before the said duke, or Broglio, could have the least notice of it; and it was so strong and lively a resemblance of the case that had now happened, that although it had

gained no credit, and was looked upon by our ministers as an invention; yet it will, I am afraid, joined with the other considerations, much affect his majesty when he shall have heard this news, and I shall (you will pardon me, sir, my heart is so full, for saying it) be suspected of having been mistaken in my thoughts and accounts of you, and particularly as to your confidence and friendship towards me.'

"I spoke to this purpose in such strong, but at the same time in such cordial and friendly terms, that he appeared a good deal touched, though not at all displeased at it; and then said;

"You have not been at all mistaken in me, nor have I in the least deceived you; when I spoke to you formerly in confidence of M. le Duc, I never meant otherwise than what I said; my intentions were always sincere for his continuation to be first minister; and even after my retreat into the country, and return to court, notwithstanding his ill treatment of me, so little deserved from him, I still resolved to live in friendship with him, though with the same freedom of speaking my mind to him as I had done before; but his unalterable perseverance in being governed entirely by those whom I detested for the sake of my king and country, made it impossible for me to go on with him at that rate;

and I had no other way to take, unless I would absolutely withdraw myself from business, which you had constantly engaged me not to do. You may remember when you last week hinted to me your apprehensions of disorders at court, and of a difference between M. le Duc and me; I did not then speak of his highness in the manner I had formerly done, and gave you plainly to understand, that the situation of things, with respect to us two, was a good deal altered. But I could not venture to tell you, though I was extremely desirous to do it, what was then in agitation; for the king had engaged me to the utmost secrecy, by letting me know that he would keep the secret, and desired that I would do so too. However I was almost tempted to tell it you when you left me on Tuesday in the afternoon: and I went so far as to send my valet de chambre to look for you at five o'clock on purpose, but you was gone to Paris; and the king's letter to M. le Duc was not delivered till six, and neither M. de Morville, nor any person whatsoever but the duke de Charost, who was to execute his majesty's orders, knew of it till after it was done. The whole matter passed betwixt the king and myself, and even without the queen's knowledge; from whence you may conclude, that the reports from Spain, as well as whatever you may have heard here, of my cabal.

ling with the duke of Orleans and others, were entirely groundless; for neither he nor the count de Thoulouse had the least intimation or apprehension of it; and when his highness came post hither yesterday morning, with a design to go immediately to Rambouillet, he was desired to return back again to Paris. What you mention of the imperial court depending upon my interest in their favour, I can assure you, to my certain knowledge, that M. Fonseca not long since wrote the contrary, and assured the emperor that he found me firm to the engagements with England. As to what Mr. Palm said to Pozzobueno, which he had from one Falnie, I must own it has a great resemblance to the event, and it struck both M. le Duc and me extremely when it was read; but it is one of those accidental things that are said sometimes by hazard, without any foundation, and yet prove true.

"You may depend upon it (which he accompanied with the strongest assurances) that this alteration in our government will not make the least change in our measures, particularly with regard to the strict union and friendship between his majesty and the king of Great Britain; and you know I have been the author and chief promoter of it. And as I have the same opinion of you which I always had, and of your character,

I am resolved to do nothing without you; and, as a convincing proof of it, I desire you will read this letter, which I have just wrote to the king of Spain, but would not send till you had seen it; which he then put into my hands. * * *

"He then told me that this letter was to be sent to Madrid by the nuncio here, inclosed in a letter which he (the bishop) would write to the king of Spain's secretary of the cabinet, desiring him to deliver it to his catholic majesty, when he should have an opportunity of doing it alone; and he added, that the nuncio had not seen it, and nobody else but myself. * * *

"In my conversation with the bishop alone, which was continued after dinner, (the marshal Berwick being the only person that dined with us, and having retired as soon as we had dined,) I began again with thanking him for the great satisfaction he had given me in his assurances and confidence on this occasion, which, I was persuaded, would be agreeable to his majesty; but I told him that certainly this great event would upon the first éclat have an effect to the disadvantage of his majesty's affairs, with regard to the union between the two crowns, which I had already perceived by my intelligence among the jacobites and others, founded upon a wrong notion they have of things, particularly with respect to his, the bishop's, prin-

ciples and zeal for his religion. I therefore hoped the liberty he had given me would excuse my enquiring, as far as was proper, about the form the administration might take, and the alteration that was like to be in the present ministry; because, although it was not the business of one court to concern itself about the persons to be employed in another, yet neighbouring princes and states would make their judgment and reflections upon the measures that are like to be taken by a court, from the known principles of the persons that are like to be employed. He then told me, with a ready freedom and cordiality, that the administration was to be carried on as in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, when he took the government into his own hands. There would be no prime minister, nor any council, any otherwise than the council of State that at present subsisted; the respective secretaries and other officers were to receive from him, the bishop, their orders, and attend and wait, in his presence, upon his most christian majesty, for all matters of expedition that required the king's sign manual; and as for matters of grace, they should pass entirely between the French king and himself alone.

"I then said, that I supposed the council of State would be augmented by the addition of marshals d'Huxelles and Berwick, and some

others: he said, as to marshal Berwick, although he had all possible confidence in him, yet as he was to be the general to command in chief, he would be contented with that employment, and did not care to be of the council. As to the marshal d'Huxelles, he did indeed heartily wish he would be of the council, but he made some difficulty on account of the rank, which he would not dispute, and yet could not yield to him (the bishop): and I believe the same reason, besides his thinking himself still of a higher quality by his birth, makes marshal Berwick decline it too. I told him there would be an easy expedient with regard to marshal d'Huxelles, which was by his being made a cardinal. He owned he thought that must be the case, and then the marshal would come into the council; and he assured me that nobody else was at all thought of.

"I then asked him, if M. de Morville was to continue in the same station? Having given me an answer as if he had really such intentions, but not as an absolute determination; I told him, that if I might be so free as to give him my opinion, I thought he could not do better; for M. de Morville was of a capacity proper to be a subaltern, had no great nor extensive genius, nor had any other ambition but that of being subservient to the person in chief power,

was supple and diligent, and consequently would now shew the same fidelity and attachment to him as he had done before to M. le Duc, for fear of losing his station. And he was of a temper, though not so open and free in his conferences with the foreign ministers as they could wish; yet he was mild and agreeable enough in his manner of treating them, and had in general the character of an honest man. All these qualities and considerations made him, I thought, proper to work under the bishop, who, I hoped, would keep the conduct of affairs entirely in his own hands, without any partner or competitor whatsoever; representing to him that in case there were any thoughts of M. de Torcy, I apprehended that the impression he had made in his former administration upon the minds of all good Englishmen, as a determined enemy to our present government, and established succession, the name of his being employed again would occasion such a general alarm in our nation, that no reasons or allegations whatever of his having changed his measures and maxims would be able to remove it; and that notwithstanding whatever I might say by his, the bishop's, authority, to the contrary, I should be looked upon as a dupe. To this I added, that as M. de Torcy had, in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, the chief conduct of fo-

reign affairs, his opinion of his own abilities in that province, and his natural ambition to be at least as considerable as he formerly was, would not make him easily acquiesce with a subordination; and consequently he might embarrass the bishop, who would not be able to remove him afterwards so easily, as he might be to keep him out of power at present. Besides he knew very well M. de Torcy's principles as to religion, being a thorough jansenist, which was very opposite to his notions. He then most solemnly assured me, he had not the least intentions of employing M. de Torcy, for the reasons I had alleged.

"I then asked him, whether I might make M. de Morville a compliment, of the great satisfaction I had of his being still to be employed? The bishop said I might go further, and tell him I was sure there were no thoughts of removing him, and that he had a particular friendship and regard for him. He then told me, that notwithstanding he had lately given me an answer, as if he should not take in M. le Blanc, as he was not indeed absolutely determined then about him; yet he must acquaint me, that it is impossible for him to do without him, especially in case of a war, he being the only person in France, by the voice of the whole nation in general, that was capable of that post.

I gave him to understand that he was looked upon as no friend to England, and I had certain knowledge of his being intimate with madame de Mezieres, and even, in the time of the duke of Orleans, of having a correspondence with the jacobites and particularly with my lord Orrery, in the last conspiracy. He told me, the late duke of Orleans was a great genius, but cunning and inconstant, and too apt to act a double game, and give trouble to those with whom he was in the strictest friendship; that M. le Blanc should be no minister, but only secretary in the room of M. Breteuil: and he would take effectual care he should do nothing that should give the least jealousy and umbrage to his majesty.

"It was impossible for me to oppose M. le Blanc's coming in any further, when the bishop gave me to understand that he was already sent for to court. I am sensible that his arrival will at first occasion reports to the disadvantage of his majesty's affairs, among the jacobites, and the ordinary news-mongers; but as we are already prevented, on his account, we shall soon see either those insinuations entirely removed, or what we are like to expect by his way of working. But I do flatter myself, that we shall have nothing to fear from him, as long as the bishop continues to govern; and it is certain his prejudice against England was in a great

measure occasioned by Sir Luke Schaub, who, by entering into all the little intrigues of the late cardinal du Bois, personally offended and affronted those that the cardinal disliked and designed to remove: However, I shall be very watchful of the part that M. le Blanc shall take; and should he act a right one, his boldness and abilities will certainly alarm the imperial court, more than any other step that could be taken here.

"The bishop afterwards gave me to understand, that M. Peletier des Forts, a great friend of Marshal Berwick, and uncle to M. Broglio, would succeed M. Dodun as controuler of the finances; he is looked upon as a very capable and honest man, but of a warm and hasty temper. I do not doubt but M. St. Florentin and M. Maurepas will continue in their posts: but I did not think it decent to ask the bishop any more questions about the administration. I only earnestly recommended to him to keep the entire management of affairs, as much as possible, in his own power, and under his own thumb; since it was plain that nobody had the least credit with his most christian majesty but himself, and that was the only way to preserve it. I exhorted him to mix with that sweet and agreeable temper and address, with which he charmed every body that approached him, vi-

gour and resolution in his councils and measures, as the only way to preserve the peace of Europe so desirable to us all.

"I then asked him, whether he would not, besides what he had wrote and said to me, give the other foreign courts and ministers here to understand, that this revolution should make no alteration in the present system of affairs, and particularly in the union and confidence between his majesty and France? He having replied that M. de Morville was ordered to prepare and sign proper letters to the principal courts of Europe for that purpose, I told him that would be at first looked upon only as a usual circular, which would have been sent of course, although there had been thoughts of this court's taking new measures; but what should come from himself would be considered as certain and authentick, his character as to his word and honour being so well known. He answered, he never designed to write himself, not taking upon him the style of prime minister; but, for the reason that I alleged, he would speak to the ministers here, in their first audience of him, especially to those of the imperial faction and influence, to the effect that I desired. Having just then received from M. Fonseca, a letter inclosing M. Orendayn's * circular to the foreign

* The Spanish secretary of State, afterwards well known under the name of the marquis de la Paz.

ministers relating to Ripperda's affair, he gave it me to read, and told me he would take the opportunity, in answer to that letter, to let M. Fonseca see that France should continue to pursue the same system of affairs and alliances that were now subsisting, for the preservation of the peace of Europe.

"Thus, my lord, ended the long conferences with the bishop, in the account of which, if I have given your grace too much trouble, I hope the importance of the occasion will excuse me; thinking it necessary to give his majesty the best light I could of what is and is like to be the present administration of affairs here, which in short will center in bishop Frejus, who, without the title of prime minister, will have the power in a more absolute manner than it was ever enjoyed by cardinal Richelieu or Mazarin.

"I am sensible that there will be various refinements and speculations, as if the bishop had it always in his mind to be prime minister, but staid until, by establishing an undoubted and unrivalled authority in the mind of the young king, he had fully prepared matters for this great stroke. But I am still of another opinion, and that he would never have had the least thoughts of removing M. le Duc, had his highness not persisted in being delivered up entirely to the advice of madame de Prie and her crea-

tures, instead of acting in concert with the bishop's opinion, for the good of the nation; until the whole nobility, clergy, and gentry, and populace, cried so loudly against M. le Duc, that it may be truly said, there never was so universal a joy in France as his removal has occasioned. Your grace may perhaps likewise hear, as most of the foreign ministers believe, that I was entirely in the secret, on the account of my not having by accident seen M. le Duc, that day, and of my having almost all the day, besides dining with the bishop, been in conference either with him or M. de Morville. Your grace will have seen, by what goes before, that I had not that honour; yet this report may have the good effect to make it sooner believed, that through my intimacy with the bishop, there is no likelihood of there being any alteration with regard to the union between England and France; and, all things considered, perhaps it was better that the bishop did not tell me of the resolution he was determined to take, since it might very much have embarrassed his majesty as to his opinion and advice about it. I think, in the main, he has shewn me a greater confidence than he has done to any one person whatever, at least of a foreigner, not excepting the pope's nuntio, who is a great favourite of his; and given me such assurances of his admi-

nistration being steady to the engagements of France, and agreeable to his majesty's interest and sentiments, that his future conduct, he being entirely the master now of this kingdom, must prove him the honestest man or the greatest ——— living; I own I have still the best opinion in the world of him.

"To conclude: after I left the bishop, I made my compliments to M. de Morville, upon the assurances I had of my being so happy as to have still the honour and pleasure of negotiating with him, which I was sure would be agreeable news to his majesty and ministry; and not to trouble you, after so long a dispatch, with what passed between us, he shewed me the letter the king wrote to him with his own hand, which was to this effect:

"We do order the sieur de Morville to do "and dispatch all matters, that shall be told "and directed by bishop Frejus, as much as if "we should speak to him ourselves."

"Louis."

CHAPTER 13.

1726.

Commencement of Cardinal Fleury's Administration—Council of State — Characters of Marshals Tallard and D'Huxelles — Continuation of Mr. Walpole's Influence.

FLEURY was in the 70th year of his age, when the helm of government was thus entrusted to his direction. Soon after this event he was nominated cardinal, a dignity which he had repeatedly refused to accept, through the interest of the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, or through the mediation of the kings of England and Spain; resolving, with no less patriotism than independence, to owe his elevation solely to the interposition of his own sovereign.

On the removal of the duke of Bourbon, the co-adjutors of Fleury, in the council of State, were the duke of Orleans, marshal Villars, and Morville. Mr. Walpole, after drawing their characters, in a letter to the duke of Newcastle, explains the motives and conduct of Fleury, in admitting the marshals d'Huxelles and Tallard: "This was the state of the ministry when his most christian majesty declared that he reposed his most intimate confidence in the cardinal; and that minister became sensible, that while his authority and power, in the management of

affairs, would be equal to that of a prime minister, he would likewise be accountable for the event of them; and that the good or bad success of the administration would entirely redound upon him. As he certainly has the best intentions, as well as a perseverance to do that which is right, so he is likewise desirous that the voice of the nation should accompany his good actions. This love of popularity, joined with the natural mildness of his temper, is sometimes a restraint upon him, and subjects him to a management that in some cases proves inconvenient; but as it never makes him swerve or deviate, in the least, from pursuing the point he has in view, he has steadiness, and with it dexterity enough to compass what he designs, without the displeasure or resentment of any body. I must do him the justice on this occasion to declare, that I believe the preserving of a strict union between his majesty and France, pursuant to the engagements now in force between the two crowns, is the foundation of his present thoughts and system, relating to the affairs of Europe.

"This being the situation and temper of the cardinal, upon the removal of M. le Duc, he thought it necessary, considering the mean opinion the world had of the council in the time of his highness, as well as consistent with the

dignity of the government, to increase the number of ministers of state*. * * * * *

"The cardinal, as your grace knows, immediately took, while he continued bishop, the marshal d'Huxelles † into the consultation upon foreign affairs, until the difficulty, on account of the rank, for admitting him formally into the council, was removed; which being done by his promotion to the cardinalship, and he, thinking it proper to add one to the council, took an occasion, as I informed your grace, to let me know that he had pitched upon the marshal de Tallard; and in talking to him upon this subject, he has told me, that he has reason to believe that marshal would act as he, the cardinal, should think fit, and that any other person that he

* Fontainebleau, Sept. 28, N. S. 1726. Walpole Papers.

† Nicholas du Blé, marquis d'Uxelles, was born in 1652. He was educated for the church, but, on the death of his elder brother in 1669, engaged in the military line. He distinguished himself on many occasions, and was rapidly promoted to the highest military honours, until he obtained the rank of marshal of France in 1703. No less fit for negotiations than for arms, he was one of the plenipotentiaries at Gertruydenberg and Utrecht. In 1718 he was constituted a counsellor of the regency. Marshal d'Uxelles is described by St. Simon as indolent, vain-glorious, voluptuous and libertine; haughty and domineering to his dependants, and servile to his superiors; full of intrigues and cunning, under the mask of the greatest simplicity. He was, however, a man of talents and business, and better acquainted with foreign affairs than his colleagues. Memoires de St. Simon, tom. xi. p. 12. Dictionnaire de la Noblesse, art. Blé.

could have thought of would have been more liable to objection. * * * * * * *

"They are both (speaking of the marshals d'Uxelles and Tallard) of the old court, which had indeed a most inveterate aversion to England, and the present happy establishment. But the continuation of so long a peace between the two nations, the low condition of the affairs of France, the apprehensions of the emperor's power, the disposition that his majesty has shewn, during his whole reign, to maintain a good understanding with this nation, joined with the general opinion here of his majesty's virtue and steadiness, and of his being daily more and more adored by his subjects, has, in a great measure, worn out the former hatred of France against England, even among the old courtiers; though there still remains a pride, which makes some of them think that England makes too great a figure, and that France should take the lead, more than they do, in the concert between the two nations. But as I have taken care to prevent the cardinal against any such notions, I think that if either marshal d'Huxelles, or Tallard, should let them appear, in some cases, it will have no effect upon the present system and measures.

"Marshal d'Huxelles will, in order to keep up that dignity which he thinks becomes his

person and character, of speaking his mind plainly, and without reserve, sometimes growl; but, to give him his due, as he becomes every day more and more instructed in the points of moment, that are in dispute with the emperor, he is more and more convinced of the justice and necessity of the measures taken by his majesty, in concert with France, before he came into the administration. His inclinations for a reconciliation with Spain are certainly greater than that crown deserves of France; and, considering the haughty temper of the queen of Spain, will rather contribute to keep it at a greater distance than to advance it. His precautions, for fear of a war, are certainly greater than the danger of one, and considering the nature of the imperial court, are more proper sometimes to make that court imperious than submissive. However, he does extremely well in the main, and has a strong aversion for the ministers of Vienna, and especially count Sinzendorf, who has no better liking to him, as the marshal has told me himself.

"The marshal Tallard * loves business extremely, to talk much, and to give his own

* Camille d'Hostun, compte de Tallard, and duc d'Hostun, was born in 1652, and embracing, at an early period, the profession of arms, raised himself so much into notice, by his courage and skill, that in the 23d year

opinion, but by his behaviour yesterday, and by his character of having been always a most servile courtier, I believe he will never differ with the cardinal in any material point.

"This account, together with what your grace will see in my other dispatch, about what has passed relating to the Ostend company, will, I presume, make his majesty extremely easy as to the present situation and disposition of this court*."

The union and friendship between Mr. Walpole and the cardinal triumphed over all the endeavours of the imperial and Spanish courts to

of his age, Turenne entrusted him with the command of the main body of his army at the battle of Mulhausen. He was created, in 1703, marshal of France; but he is less known for his various successes than for his memorable defeat at the battle of Blenheim, by the duke of Marlborough, where he was taken prisoner. The loss of the battle, however, was not imputed to his misconduct; for the same year he was appointed governor of Franche Comté, and on his return from England, in 1712, created duc d'Hostun.

He is thus described by the caustic St. Simon: "C'etoit un homme de taille médiocre, avec des yeux un peu jaloux, pleins de feu et d'esprit, mais qui ne voyoient goutte, maigre, have, qui representoit l'ambition, l'envie et l'avarice; beaucoup d'esprit, et de graces dans l'esprit; mais sans cesse battu du diable, par son ambition, ses vues, ses menées et ses detours, et qui ne pensoit et ne respiroit autre chose; un homme, enfin, à la compagnie duquel tout le monde se plaisoit, et à qui personne ne se fioit." Memoires de St. Simon, tom. xiv. p. 21.

* Fontainebleau, Sept. 28, N. S. 1726.

infuse jealousy between France and England, and defeated all the intrigues of the Jacobites, who founded sanguine hopes on the elevation of a catholic bishop, and of the Spanish party in France, who thought the glory of their country was tarnished by her alliance with England. But, to use Mr. Walpole's own expressions, "these artful designs were soon all disappointed by the cardinal's firmness; and he wrote himself, at Mr. Walpole's request, and caused the secretary of State, Morville, to write letters, conceived in the strongest terms, to Spain, in justification of his Britannic majesty's measures, by sending his squadrons into the West Indies, the Mediterranean, and on the coast of Spain, to testify the French king's resolution to stand by his engagements with England, to the great surprise of the Spaniards, and indeed of all Europe, considering the cardinal's supposed bigotry, and his antient attachment to king Philip. And such was Mr. Walpole's management and influence with him, that although his eminence had nothing more at heart than to bring about a reconciliation of the family difference, between the nephew and the uncle, yet he never could be worked upon by the turbulent spirit of the queen of Spain, by the intrigues of jesuits, nuntios, and other emissaries, to attempt to do it at the price and hazard of breaking the

union of France with England; and while the malevolent patriots and Jacobites industriously exposed, in their libels, Mr. Walpole as a dupe to the cardinal, the queen of Spain used to say publicly, that his eminence was a *poltron*, and governed entirely by that heretic Horace Walpole.

"The cardinal's steadiness, in concurring with his Britannic majesty, in all his negotiations with foreign powers, so strengthened the treaty of Hanover, as to frustrate and defeat all the views and resources employed in all parts by the Germans and the Spaniards, to enable them to execute the vast projects of their Vienna treaties*."

Soon after Fleury's elevation, Mr. Walpole experienced a striking instance of his confidence and sincerity. He had determined to remove the duke of Orleans from the council of State, with a view of placing the government on the same foot as under Louis the Fourteenth, when the princes of the blood were excluded from all share in the administration of affairs; but he was diverted from this resolution, by the strong and friendly remonstrances of Mr. Walpole. After complimenting him on the general approbation he had gained by the removal of the duke of Bourbon, and the moderation he had displayed towards his enemies, the British minister displayed the fatal effects which might arise from

* Mr. Walpole's Apology.

the exclusion of the duke of Orleans, and the embarrassment it might produce in administration, by uniting the princes of the blood against him. He then urged, in strong terms, the jealousy which such a step would occasion in those powers who were guarantees to the succession of the house of Orleans, as settled by the peace of Utrecht, as if he was preparing to undermine that succession, by removing the presumptive heir to the crown.

These remonstrances staggered Fleury, and in a subsequent conference he thanked Mr. Walpole for his advice, and assured him that he had relinquished his intention of removing the duke of Orleans from the council of State.

CHAPTER 14.

1726—1727.

Proceedings in Parliament relative to the Treaties of Vienna and Hanover — Embarrassments of Cardinal Fleury — His Declarations to Mr. Robinson — Mission and Character of the Abbot Montgon — Uncertain State of the French Cabinet — Siege of Gibraltar — Successful Representations of Mr. Walpole — Vigorous Resolutions of the French Court — Measures of the Hanover Allies — Preliminaries of Peace signed at Vienna — Death of George the First.

MR. WALPOLE quitted Paris on the 12th of December, leaving, as usual, the conduct of the British affairs to Mr. Robinson; and passing through Holland, where he concerted with the leading members of the republic, the plan of operations for the approaching contest, reached London before the meeting of parliament.

The speech from the throne, on this important occasion, contained a remarkable passage: "I have likewise received information, from different parts, on which I can entirely depend, that the placing the pretender upon the throne of this kingdom is one of the articles of the secret engagements."

This charge, formally announced from the mouth of the king, was as formally disavowed by the emperor, and occasioned his imprudent

appeal to the British nation, by the publication of his minister, count Palm's memorial, which roused the spirit of the people, and united all parties in support of the dignity of the throne. This formal charge on one side, and denial on the other, of the two sovereigns, gave rise to a controversy, which occupied the attention of Europe at the period, and is still undecided. Mr. Walpole, whose sagacity and information cannot be disputed, and whose sincerity cannot be questioned, believed the existence of these secret articles; as appears from numerous documents and observations in his own hand-writing, found among his papers, not only during the negotiations against Spain and the emperor, but even in the latter period of his life, when he had no views or interests to promote. Perhaps no proof made a stronger impression on his mind than the communication of the secret articles by two Sicilian abbots, of great birth and consequence, who received them from king Philip himself, on the 15th of November 1725, for the purpose of making their observations*.

* I have, in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole†, asserted, "that the papers and documents submitted to my inspection fully display the proofs on which the reality of the secret articles was formed," and which occasioned the public declarations of the king and ministers in parliament; that the empe-

† Chap. 28, and Vol. ii. Correspondence, particularly the article Ripperda.

The spirit of England was roused by the imperious conduct and menaces of the emperor and Spain; and the efforts of parliament co-operated with the zeal of the nation. The address

ror and king of Spain proposed to attempt the recovery of Gibraltar, and the restoration of the pretender. I flattered myself, that the documents I had inserted in the Correspondence, and the proofs I had given in the Memoirs, would be sufficiently decisive, in the opinion of any reasonable and unprejudiced person, to certify (as far as was compatible with the nature of such evidence) the existence of the secret articles. The only contradiction to these proofs was the simple disavowal of the emperor; but his assertion can be of little weight in this instance, as he equally denied other secret stipulations, which were afterwards proved. In fact, the *confidential* letter from count Zinzendorf, the emperor's favourite minister, to Palm, confirms beyond a doubt the secret resolutions of the emperor.

"Do they say there is a secret engagement entered into in the offensive alliance concerning Gibraltar? That is the greatest untruth, as the treaty itself shews. Do they say an agreement is made concerning the pretender? That is likewise the greatest untruth that can be imagined. Let them ask all the Jacobites, whether they have heard one word from us or from Spain that could be construed to mean such an enterprise, SO LONG AS WE DON'T ENTER INTO A WAR? *but then we shall help ourselves as well as we can.* In short, the mad English ministry shall never bring us to any thing through fear: our measures are so taken, that certainly we shall be able to oppose the aggressor."

These words, if they mean any thing, prove the point in dispute. For it cannot be supposed that the emperor intended to assist the pretender, unless he entered into a war with England; and that war could only be avoided on the part of England, by acceding to the treaty of Vienna, which stipulated the restitution of Gibraltar, and contained articles inimical to

to the king was carried in the house of commons by 251 votes against 81, and in the house of lords by a great majority. A subsidy was granted to the landgrave of Hesse Cassel for the

the commerce of England, and the subsisting treaties in Europe.'

It is needless to quote any more of this extraordinary letter, which contains only vague assertions of the emperor's peaceable desires; yet Mr. William Belsham cites this very letter as "an *historical demonstration*, that the intelligence upon which the court of London relied in this instance, was wholly erroneous, from whatever quarter, or with whatever view or intention it might have been communicated." I must, however, remark, that this author, with his usual inaccuracy of quotation, when a passage militates against his own opinion, has omitted two threatening sentences; the first beginning with, "In short the mad English, &c." and the second, which thus concludes the letter, "*What then is the cause and reason for making war? The augmentation of* 30,000 *men goes on, and we are sure of many friends.*"

The same author, after citing the sentence of the Memoirs, at the beginning of this note, adds, "If this cloudy jargon be intended to convey a belief of the reality of this design, let him produce those papers and documents which he pretends to have been submitted to his inspection, and which shall outweigh and supersede the positive and confidential declaration of the imperial prime minister to the imperial embassador, actually resident at the court of London." Mr. William Belsham's Two Historical Dissertations, page 82.

I am unwilling to deluge the public with more State papers, after having published two thick quarto volumes; but it will be a sufficient answer to Mr. Belsham's challenge, to subjoin the fifth article of the secret treaty, which was communicated to Platania and Carraccioli, the two Sicilian abbots, by king Philip himself:

"5° Their cesarean and catholic majesties, foreseeing that the king of England will oppose the execution of such designs,

maintenance of 12,000 men; and a vote of credit passed, empowering the king to defray the expences of his engagements. Before the close of the session, which terminated on the 15th of May, the critical position of affairs hurried Mr. Walpole to Paris, to keep France steady to her engagements, and to concert active operations; as Spain had already commenced hostilities by the siege of Gibraltar, and the emperor was making vast preparations to carry his threats into execution.

During the absence of the British minister, the jealousy entertained by the court of Versailles of the English squadrons had increased; and the alarm at the stoppage of the galloons, which had occasioned bankruptcies among the French mer-

as well in regard to his particular interests, as not to lose his umpireship in Europe, for which reason he will undoubtedly engage the English nation, and unite the Dutch and other princes in his league, they oblige themselves to seek all methods to restore the pretender to the throne of Great Britain; to which end the catholic king was to make use of the pretence of the restitution of Gibraltar, which he was to demand immediately as soon as the peace of Vienna was published."

The free remarks which these ecclesiastics made on the secret articles, inflamed the resentment of Philip, and he banished them from Spain. They then retired into France, enjoyed the protection of the French government, and imparted much useful intelligence to Mr. Walpole. I trust this document, in addition to those already published, will shew the futility of opposing *vague conjectures* and *perverted reasoning* against positive fact.

chants, raised a clamour against the administration of Fleury. Mr. Robinson having delivered to the cardinal a strong memorial from Mr. Walpole, urging him to listen to no proposal from Spain, but to declare war on the first hostility against Gibraltar; he candidly displayed the embarrassments under which he laboured, and expressed a desire to open a negotiation with the emperor, or Spain, rather than court hostilities.

"The allies," he said, "may trust me, that I shall never receive any proposal, without communicating it to them, nor give any answer but what is agreeable to their sentiments. But as much management as I am bound to have for them, I am no less obliged to have some for our own people. The king has, and still honours me with his most intimate confidence; but I am far from having that of the nation in general, who, by the arts of some, or the ignorance of others, are taught to imagine that I myself am too easy, and entirely led by the English. What is still worse, this evil has crept into the council; and I am often obliged to hear these reproaches thrown to my face; or when certain persons dare not contradict, at the board, the force of my reasons, they are afterwards weak or malicious enough to give out in the world, that I am the only author of all: it is in vain

that they oppose me, and sometimes truly, sometimes falsely, arrogate to themselves the public merit of having done so. This is my situation, which would be much worse if I did not appear to be as ready and willing to hear all proposals for an accommodation, as I am resolute and determined to reject all such as cannot be received by the allies. An instance happened yesterday in council, to whom I appealed; applying myself to the king, whether they had not all been of opinion that the first proposal from the emperor was not receivable? they answered yes; and so of the second. I asked the same of the last, to which they gave the same reply; I then desired they would remember it, that on my side I might hear no more reproaches, and that on theirs they might expect to see me act in consequence of what they then avowed.

"I speak to you," he added, "with sincerity, and as frankly as I write. I flatter myself this openness made my late letter as well received by the king of England as all my others are, I hope, by Mr. Walpole. I shew the difficulties I labour under at home, as well as point out to you what you have to rely upon. There is that difference between what I appear to do here, and what I am resolved to do in the main; the one is for my honour, the other for my self-preservation. To do otherwise than I do for

the allies, would be to forfeit my word; and I might run the risk of being stoned, if I was thought here to do so much; for you must not imagine that this nation is universally disposed to a war, or will easily be brought to make one upon Spain; and therefore I am at a loss how to answer Mr. Walpole, when he demands that we should declare immediate war against that nation on the first hostility of Gibraltar. There is the same reason for me not to disoblige the people of France, as there is with him for satisfying the people of England. But we have one method left still to dispose the French to a war, which is by turning wholly upon the emperor, and making him the chief author of it, and sufferer by it; which will have this good effect, to convince the king of Spain, better than all the force in the world, of the emperor's weakness, of which, as well as of his insincerity, his catholic majesty is already grown sufficiently jealous *."

At the conclusion of this discourse, the cardinal added, that the sentiments he then disclosed were of too delicate a nature to be communicated in a dispatch to the secretary of State, and were only suitable to the intimacy between Mr. Walpole and himself.

* Mr. Robinson to Mr. Walpole, Paris, Jan. 8, 1727.

The embarrassments of the cardinal do not seem to have been sufficiently appreciated by the British cabinet, who urged him to reinforce the garrison of Gibraltar with a corps of French troops, which would have been an instant declaration of war against Spain. The extreme delicacy of his situation was heightened by the arrival of the abbot Montgon at Paris, with overtures for an accommodation from Philip, who was not unacquainted with the wavering state of the French cabinet, and was supported by a numerous body of adherents.

Charles Alexander de Montgon, descended from the antient family of Cordebeuf, was born at Versailles in 1690. His father had served under Philip the Fifth as lieutenant-general, and his mother had been lady of the bed-chamber to the dauphiness. At an early period he embraced the military service; but seized with a fit of devotion, renounced the profession of arms, resigned his inheritance to his brother, and entered into the church. Having expressed a desire to live in Spain, d'Aubenton, confessor of Philip the Fifth, prevailed on the king to appoint Montgon preceptor to his children; but the nomination was frustrated by the death of d'Aubenton.

His hopes, however, of gaining an establishment in Spain, did not subside; and on the ab-

dication of Philip, he obtained, through the mediation of father Bermudas, the new confessor, the permission of accompanying the abdicated monarch in his retreat to St. Ildefonso, "without any other view," as he says, "than that of being a nearer witness of his virtues, and of strengthening, by his example, his own good resolutions." His journey, however, to St. Ildefonso being prevented by Philip's sudden resumption of the crown, Montgon was not deterred by the corruption of a court, and after some negotiation with father Bermudas, was permitted to attach himself "to the person of so pious a monarch."

As he repaired to Madrid soon after the dismission of the infanta, he was commissioned by the duke of Bourbon to bring about a reconciliation between the two crowns, which he readily accepted, though he affected an aversion to all worldly affairs. Being of a lively imagination and plausible manners, and blending the fervour of devotion with the spirit of intrigue, he rendered himself acceptable to the king and queen of Spain, and was employed by them in the delicate negotiation of detaching France from England, and of securing the eventual succession of Philip.

Montgon had offended Fleury by his officious communication of the bishop's supposed intrigues

in Spain, and on his mission to Paris, increased that disgust by his petty cabals and aspiring views. Fleury described him to Mr. Robinson as "a poor credulous creature." "The abbot," he said, "had hitherto appeared to him a poor simple kind of man, susceptible of believing every thing he heard, and officiously good enough in the communication of it. But, perhaps, now he should alter his judgment of the man, and look upon him as an ambitious meddler, under the mask of a religious retreat*."

* Though Montgon affected to decline riches and dignities, he aspired to be embassador from France to Spain, and solicited a rich abbey in France. Failing in these objects, which he justly imputed to the opposition of cardinal Fleury, he returned to Spain. His reception from the king and queen, and the encomiums lavished on his address and abilities, revived his hopes of promotion. Affecting to decline the offer of minister of State, he requested the embassy to Turin, and even expected a cardinal's hat; but all these hopes ending in disappointment, the credulous abbot retired from Spain, and passed his days in a private situation and straitened circumstances.

With a view to revenge himself on Fleury, to whom he attributed his disgrace and disappointments, he published his Memoirs in eight volumes. The greater part of these Memoirs is filled with eulogiums of his own address, prudence, disinterestedness and moderation; hints of his high lineage, declamations on the storms and corruptions of a court; effusions of religious fervour, and details of his petty disputes, and the grievances which he experienced from the cardinal. They are larded with perpetual quotations from the scriptures and the fathers; but, in the midst of this farrago, contain many curious anecdotes, develope many interesting events,

The object of Montgon's mission was two-fold; first to separate France from England, and secondly to secure to Philip the eventual succession to the throne. Montgon arrived at Versailles on the 30th of January, and on the 31st had his first interview with the cardinal. He delivered a memorial, written by the queen of Spain herself; in which she expressed the inclination of the king, her husband, to renew the friendship interrupted by the dismission of the infanta, provided the king of France was disposed to prefer the alliance of Spain and the emperor to that of protestant princes, and would separate himself from England, by acceding to the treaty of Vienna. Fleury received this intimation with great appearance of deference; but declared the condition of acceding to the treaty of Vienna inadmissible, being no less derogatory to the glory of France, than contrary to their engagements with their allies. But in the course of this, and subsequent conversations, he testified his intention to defer hostilities against Spain, as long as was consistent with honour and propriety; though he expressed a wish that Gibraltar might be taken by a *coup de main*, because if the siege was prolonged, the

and exhibit a striking picture of the policy and finesse of the cardinal, and of the weakness and ambition of the court of Spain.

French must fulfil their engagements with England.

In regard to the second object of his mission, Montgon had received specific instructions written by Philip himself, to arrange a plan with his partisans for his eventual succession; and was furnished with a letter of credence to the parliament, enjoining them to proclaim him king, should Louis the Fifteenth die suddenly without issue*. With a view to facilitate the execution of this project, Montgon was instructed to gain the duke of Bourbon, by offers of pardon for the past, and promises of future favours; but he was ordered to make no communication either to Fleury or Morville. Yet even in the first interview, Fleury, by his respectful attentions, apparent candour, and the warmest expressions of attachment to king Philip, gradually drew from Montgon the whole purport of his mission. In reply to some insinuations that he was governed by England, "I am not English," ex-

* C'est que si (ce qu'à Dieu ne plaise) le roi mon neveu venoit à mourir sans heritiers mâles, étant, comme je le suis, le plus proche parent, & mes descendans après moi, je dois & veux succéder à la couronne de mes ancêtres.

"IX. Je vous donne une lettre de créance de ma main pour le parlement, pour la présenter à l'instant de la mort du roi mon neveu, dans laquelle j'ordonne qu'à l'instant que ce cas arrivera, on me proclame roi." Memoires de Montgon, tom. iii. p. 70, 74.

claimed the cardinal, "and I am anxious you should know, what the king of Spain cannot but recollect, that during the whole administration of cardinal du Bois, and even after his death, the king of England always suspected me of being hostile to his views. Have I not been always sincerely attached to the pretender? And as a bishop, must I not ardently desire to see the re-establishment of a catholic prince on the throne of England? The late queen of England*, who honoured me with her attentions, and I may say with her confidence, was well acquainted with my sentiments."

After urging his inviolable attachment to king Philip, and insensibly leading the conversation to the marriage of the king of France, he suddenly asked, "What part do you think the king of Spain would act, should the king die without issue?" Montgon, however, with affected reserve, replying, "That his catholic majesty would open himself to the cardinal, as to an old and faithful servant of the king his grandfather;" Fleury continued, "Should God, as we trust and hope, preserve the king, and give him heirs, this event will not happen; but should we unfortunately lose our king, can their catholic majesties doubt, that in so deplorable a case, I should forget what I owe to the blood of Louis the Four-

* Alluding to the queen of James II.

teenth?" Montgon, affected with this artful apostrophe, instantly communicated the whole secret of his mission, and delivered a copy of his instructions.

Fleury received this communication with great composure, and, anxious to learn the sentiments and conduct of the duke of Bourbon, who, he knew, was caballing with the duke of Maine and Morville, even promoted a secret interview between the duke and Montgon.

In consequence of this arrangement, Montgon had a meeting at night with the duke of Bourbon, at his seat of Ecouen, between Paris and Chantilly; but without apprising him that it was by the contrivance of Fleury. After a conference of several hours, the duke promised to promote the succession of Philip, and was persuaded to write conciliatory letters to the king and queen of Spain. Montgon hastened to communicate the success of his conference, and a copy of the letter, which he afterwards received, to Fleury, who testified no less approbation than surprise at his diligence, secrecy, and address. He even enlivened the conversation with much pleasantry, and rallied the honest abbot on the credit which he had derived from his nocturnal visit, in his passage through St. Dennis, as a man of *bonnes fortunes* *."

* Memoires de Montgon, tom. iii, p. 244, 245.

Although Fleury despised the capacity of Montgon, yet he felt the ill effects of his mission, from the increasing cabals of the Spanish party, and the opposition of his colleagues in the cabinet. He fluctuated, therefore, between his anxious desire to avoid hostilities against Spain, and to preserve his engagements with England.

In this situation of affairs, the Spanish party dreaded the arrival of Mr. Walpole; and Villars said to Montgon, who was urging the necessity of permitting the siege of Gibraltar, and of separating France from England, "It would be no great misfortune were the English driven from the continent of Spain; and truly, I believe, we should not much regard either their chagrin or resentment; but as the siege will be protracted, and the event doubtful, it will be extremely difficult, not to say impossible, to resist the instances of Mr. Walpole to engage us in hostilities; and what interest has Spain in pushing things to such extremities?" When Montgon urged the common topics of the haughtiness and aggressions of England, Villars rejoined, "All you say is fine and specious; but I repeat, Walpole is urgent, importunate, and much listened to here. He will soon arrive, and you will yourself witness the result of his solicitations *."

* Memoires de Montgon, tom. iii. p. 296.

The event justified these observations: Mr. Walpole arrived at Paris on the sixth of March; in his first interview with the cardinal he fixed his wavering resolutions; and on the 30th Fleury made an animated speech, before the council of State, in favour of their engagements with England. "The cardinal," writes Mr. Walpole, "then from the fulness of his heart, told me, if I had heard what he had said, no longer than yesterday at council, in the presence of his most christian majesty, I should no longer be under the least uneasiness about his steadiness and resolution. "I took an opportunity," said he, "to let the king and council know, the time was now near that would certainly determine peace or war. His majesty must be prepared to act accordingly, pursuant to his engagements with his allies. The king of England, a prince of the greatest honour and integrity, had been in every respect faithful to his union and alliance with France; had constantly acted with the greatest harmony and concert with this crown in all his measures; had sufficiently shewn his sincere desire to preserve the peace, by agreeing to the propositions now to be offered to the emperor and Spain, which were originally from England, by his not only consenting that France should suspend the declaring war against Spain, but he had himself likewise

deferred doing it, (notwithstanding his town of Gibraltar is actually besieged,) until he sees the success of the preliminaries now proposed, and that there can be no hopes left for an accommodation. His most christian majesty must accordingly think, if they should not be accepted, of taking measures, in conjunction with the allies, for carrying on the war: the Dutch have equally shewn their desire of peace, as well as deference to the opinion of France; for although they had demanded twenty-five years for the suspension of the Ostend charter and commerce with the Indies, as necessary for the abolition of that trade, yet, in complaisance to the sentiments of this court, they had agreed to accept of seven years only for that suspension: and therefore, as their allies had acted with all possible concert and regard for France, and with some good inclination for preserving, if possible, the peace, there would be no manner of difficulty or hesitation on the part of France to act with the same steadiness and regard for them; and he must lay it down for a maxim, from which he thought his most christian majesty must not deviate, and upon which the prosperity of his future government must entirely depend, which was to begin his reign by a strict and inviolable observation of his treaties and engagements with his allies."

"This," said the cardinal, "was what I spoke but yesterday at council, without the least opposition or contradiction; while the marshal d'Huxelles hung down his head, silent, and sullen; and if you can put M. de Morville upon this subject, without taking any notice of what has passed between us, he will tell you the same thing*."

The conduct of the French cabinet did not belie the assurances of Fleury; France, notwithstanding her jealousy of the English squadrons, co-operated with effect and vigour in counteracting the designs of the imperial and Spanish courts.

At this crisis Mr. Stanhope, who quitted Madrid in consequence of the commencement of hostilities, was received with high marks of approbation by the French king and ministry, and conveyed to the British cabinet the satisfactory intelligence of the good intentions of the French court, and particularly the firmness and sincerity of the cardinal. "Upon which," writes the duke of Newcastle to Mr. Walpole, "I must congratulate your excellency, as what is in great measure owing to your great abilities and care, in the conduct of his majesty's affairs under your management†."

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, Paris, March 31, 1727.

† Whitehall, April 6, 1727. Walpole Papers.

The affairs of the Hanover allies now wore the most favourable aspect. The States-General had acceded to the treaty of Hanover on the ninth of August 1726, and Sweden and Denmark at the commencement of the ensuing year. On the 23d of March the trenches were opened before Gibraltar; and Philip anxiously expected the co-operation of the emperor and Russia. But the situation of Charles was considerably changed: he was disappointed of the subsidies from Spain; he was awed by the assembling of the Hessian, Swedish, and Danish troops, subsidised by England and France, and alarmed at the approach of a French army, collecting on the frontiers of Germany; he was deserted by the circles and princes of the empire, he dreaded the defection of Prussia, and was dispirited by the death of the czarina. He therefore made private overtures to cardinal Fleury, and hastily negotiated the preliminaries of a peace, without the consent or knowledge of Spain, with England, France, and Holland, which his plenipotentiary signed at Paris, in the name of his master, and the king of Spain, on the 31st of May.

Philip, thus deserted by his only ally, seeing his frontiers exposed to the invasion of France, his coasts menaced by the English fleets, and his treasures detained in America, was compelled

to accept the conditions obtained by the emperor; and the preliminaries were signed at Vienna in June, by his embassador the duke de Beurnonville.

But this favourable aspect of affairs was overclouded by the sudden death of George the First, who expired on the 31st of June at Osnaburg, on his journey to Hanover.

CHAPTER 15.

1727.

Critical Situation of Mr. Walpole on the Death of George the First — Cabals of the Jacobites at Paris — Rumours of a Change in the British Administration — Conference with Fleury — Letter from the Cardinal — Departure of Mr. Walpole — Arrival in London, and Audience of George the Second — Letter from the King to the Cardinal — From Mr. Robinson to the Duke of Newcastle — Mr. Walpole returns to Paris — Spain refuses to ratify the Preliminaries — Opposite Views of the Allies of Vienna and Hanover — Warlike Preparations — Anecdotes of Marshal Berwick.

THE death of George the First placed Mr. Walpole in a critical situation. The news no sooner reached Paris, than the jacobites, particularly Atterbury, who considered the commencement of a new reign as a favourable juncture, caballed for the restoration of the pretender, and openly displayed the most sanguine hopes of success. Their hopes were strengthened by the officious declarations of Montgon, who was considered as the confidential agent of Philip, that their cause would be supported by the whole force of Spain, that a reconciliation was on the point of taking place between the two branches of the house of Bourbon, and that

England would be compelled to drive the house of Brunswick from the throne, and re-establish the lawful sovereign*. Rumours were likewise circulated, that if the accession of George the Second was undisturbed, a change of administration would take place, lord Townshend and Sir Robert Walpole be driven from the helm, and Mr. Walpole recalled from Paris. Reports were no less industriously spread, of Fleury's duplicity, and his equivocal insinuations construed into positive declarations in favour of the pretender.

Mr. Walpole, who had vouched for his sincerity to the British cabinet, requested an immediate interview with the cardinal, who was with the king at Rambouillet. Fleury repaired, without delay, to Versailles, where a conference

* Montgon afterwards weakly and confidentially avowed these sentiments to Mr. Walpole; and informed him that he had a written letter to the queen of Spain's confessor, predicting great troubles in England, and urging Spain to act accordingly; but the cardinal diverted him from sending the letter. Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, August 16, 1727.

Montgon has detailed a curious conversation with Fleury, who was anxious to learn whether the king of Spain would interfere in favour of the pretender, on the death of George the First. The abbot speaking of his restoration, with full certainty, the cardinal, after reiterating his good wishes, added, "But it is useless to feed again on chimeras, and it is a chimera to believe that the death of George the First will make any change in England. Nothing less than a miracle will operate in favour of the pretender." Tom. v. p. 5.

took place on the following day. This interview dissipated in a moment all doubts, if Mr. Walpole may be supposed to have entertained doubts, of the cardinal's sincerity. Fleury received him with the highest marks of cordiality, testified the strongest personal attachment to him, and the greatest regard for his brother; and expressed his earnest wishes that no change of administration might take place in England. He renewed his solemn assurances, that France would not interfere in the government of England, and would inviolably maintain the engagements between the two crowns. After this amicable conference, which lasted till near midnight, Mr. Walpole returned to Paris with an intention to forward a messenger to the British ministry; but had scarcely arrived before he received a letter from the cardinal.

"Versailles*, 26th of June 1727. After having reflected, Sir, since your departure, on all the measures to be taken, under the loss which we have recently sustained, I am persuaded that your excellency cannot do otherwise than repair instantly to London, to receive in person the orders of his Britannic majesty, and explain to him the situation of the present affairs, of which he cannot as yet be duly informed. Your

* The original letter, of which this is a translation, is among the Walpole Papers, in the cardinal's own hand.

excellency will do more in one or two conferences, than in volumes of letters; and you can settle with his Britannic majesty all things which may concern the common interests of the Hanover allies. From the manner in which your excellency has spoken of the new king, I doubt not but he will follow the same principles and the same system as the king his father. In regard to us, your excellency may assure his Britannic majesty, that we will not depart from that system; and that our reciprocal security consists in being firmly united.

"I have only to add the assurance, sir, of the share which I take in your regret, and that I shall honour you my whole life more than any other person on earth."

In conformity with this prudent and friendly advice, Mr. Walpole departed instantly from Paris, and on his arrival at London found his friends extremely embarrassed, and uncertain of their destiny. The king had announced a resolution to place Sir Spencer Compton at the head of the treasury, in the room of Sir Robert Walpole; and the opposition expected that a mixed administration of Whigs and Tories would be appointed; while queen Caroline was labouring to conquer the king's aversion to Sir Robert Walpole, and to convince him that a

change of the ministry, at this period, would be unfavourable to his interests.

In this uncertain state of affairs Mr. Walpole was admitted to an audience, experienced a cold reception, and found the king extremely dissatisfied because he quitted his post without orders. As an apology for his sudden departure, he delivered the letter from the cardinal, which appeared to soften the king's resentment. Mr. Walpole availed himself of this favourable change to display the state of foreign affairs, confirmed the sentiments of the French cabinet, contained in the letter of cardinal Fleury, and, after an audience of two hours, was dismissed in terms of approbation.

This interview, and the letter of Fleury, assisted the endeavours of queen Caroline in favour of the ministry; and fixed the king in his resolution to maintain the same system which his father had pursued. Impressed with these sentiments, he wrote, with his own hand, a gracious letter to Fleury, which announced his full approbation of Mr. Walpole's services, and his confidence in the cardinal's sincerity.

" Kensington, the 20th* of June, 1727.

" My Cousin,

" The obliging manner in which you ex-

* O. S. 1st July, N. S. This letter is translated from a copy preserved in the Walpole Papers.

pressed your wish, that my embassador Walpole should instantly depart to give the most positive assurances of the intention of my good brother, the most christian king, to cultivate that union which is so happily established between the two crowns, as well as his desire to perfect the great work of a general pacification: and the strong expressions you have used in your late letter to the said embassador, to testify your zeal for the public good, and the particular interest you take in every thing which regards my government, have so moved me, that I would not defer shewing you how much I am sensible of it; and of acquainting you with my decided resolution, to pursue the same wise and fair measures which have placed affairs in their present happy situation, and to draw closer the bonds of friendship which unite me to his most christian majesty.

"I, with pleasure, embrace this opportunity to testify my high sense of your merit, my reliance in your sincerity, and the good will with which I am,

"My cousin,

"Your affectionate cousin,

"GEORGE REX."

The extreme satisfaction which the cardinal expressed, at the reception of the king's letter, is described by Mr. Robinson in a dispatch to

the duke of Newcastle, dated Paris, July 4, 1727.

"Your grace's other dispatch, inclosing his majesty's letter to the cardinal, required immediate execution; and having heard that his eminence was at Issy, near Paris, instead of accompanying the French king, as it was thought he would have done, to Rambouillet, I sent thither to demand his leave, and his hour, for my waiting upon him; which he having given for any time of the day, I did not lose a moment in going to present to him the king's letter, which his eminence opened and read in my presence; and it was easy to perceive, by his looks, what sensible pleasure it gave him, even before he expressed, as he did in the handsomest manner and words, his acknowledgements and thanks for so high and early a mark of his majesty's esteem and affection.

"He told me he had indeed been already prevented with the hopes of having a place in his majesty's good opinion, by what count Broglio had acquainted him of the king's sentiments and regard for him, which his majesty had so strongly expressed at that minister's last departure from England. He repeated often being no less pleased with the civilities that were then made by the prince of Wales, than with the distinction now shewn him by the king.

"As I found that this circumstance seemed

to have made much impression upon his eminence, I could not forbear, in order to make him as sensible as lay in my power, of his majesty's personal esteem for him, to acquaint him, that when I was in England, and had the honour to be presented to the king, his majesty, in enquiring after France, had had the goodness to turn the questions he was pleased to make me entirely to the cardinal's subject, and particularly with relation to his eminency's health, and to his drinking the waters at that time. 'And had the king that goodness?' replied the cardinal, 'and was it possible he should know I was drinking the waters?'

"I beg pardon, my lord, for mentioning these little incidents of conversations; they are little indeed, but, even as such, may perhaps serve to shew how extremely pleased and flattered the cardinal is with his majesty's past and present goodness to him."

The cardinal was equally pleased with the account of the king's quiet accession, and was particularly gratified with the paragraph of the declaration to the council, which expressed a resolution to "cultivate the alliances entered into by the late king, for restoring the tranquillity and preserving the balance of Europe, and to improve and perfect this great work, for the honour, interest, and security of his people."

Mr. Walpole hastened to announce, in a letter to his friend the cardinal, the gracious reception he had experienced from the king his master, and the strong impressions which the letter had made in his favour. And he concludes by observing, "Your eminence may be fully satisfied that, both in regard to foreign and domestic affairs, every thing will go as you wish."

This letter was written on the 3d* of July, and on the 4th Sir Robert Walpole was reappointed first lord of the Treasury, lord Townshend and the duke of Newcastle secretaries of State; Mr. Walpole received his new credentials, but delayed his departure to Paris at the express command of the king, who required his assistance at the ensuing session of parliament, when the increase of the civil list, and the jointure of queen Caroline, were to be moved by his brother.

The session† was uncommonly short and tranquil. The two houses agreed to support the king in all his foreign engagements, and the commons voted an addition to the civil list, with the single dissenting voice of Shippen.

After the unanimous proof of attachment and loyalty displayed by the parliament, the presence of Mr. Walpole was no longer necessary.

* 22d June, O. S.

† The Session opened the 27th June, O. S.

He returned to Paris on the 18th of July, and on the 22d was received by the cardinal with increased esteem and cordiality. They acted together more like friends than ministers, and renewed their mutual endeavours to establish the tranquillity of Europe, which the death of George the First seemed likely to disturb.

Philip, flattered with the hopes of commotions in England, and of the concurrence of France, delayed the execution of the preliminaries, declined raising the siege of Gibraltar, and refused to restore the prince Frederic, a ship which he had taken from the South Sea Company. He was privately encouraged by the emperor, who, expected new subsidies from Spain, and made vast preparations to open the campaign in Germany, by attacking the electorate of Hanover, and the United Provinces. Europe was again threatened with hostilities; and the same chain of negotiations was to be recommenced, as had preceded the signature of the preliminaries.

The allies of Hanover were not disconcerted by this change of affairs; England continued to reinforce her naval armaments, and to summon into the field the subsidiary troops. France resisted the specious offers of Spain, and the machinations and threats of the emperor, and concurred with England in forming a plan of hostile ope-

rations, to pour their combined forces into the heart of the Austrian dominions.

This contest, which united the rival powers of England and France on one side, and of Spain and the empire on the other, exhibited a no less extraordinary phænomenon in the annals of history. Marshal Berwick, natural son of James the Second, was employed in concerting with Mr. Walpole, the brother of the great Whig minister, and supporter of the Brunswic family, operations against the emperor and Spain, who, on their side, were meditating to place his brother, the pretender, on the throne of his ancestors.

James Fitz-James was natural son of James the Second, by Arabella Churchill*, sister of John duke of Marlborough. He was born in 1670, at Moulins, in the Bourbonnois, as his mother was returning from the medicinal waters of Bourbon, and in the seventh year of his age was sent to France to be educated in the roman catholic religion. He was destined to the profession of arms; at seventeen he served his two first campaigns with the imperial troops in Hun-

* Arabella Churchill, after bearing the duke of Berwick, and Henrietta, who espoused Henry earl of Waldegrave, married colonel Charles Godfrey, master of the Jewel Office, by whom she had two daughters; the first espoused Hugh Boscawen viscount of Falmouth, the second Edward Dunch of Wiltenham in the county of Bucks.

gary, against the Turks, and signalised himself at the siege of Buda, where he was wounded, and at the battle of Mohatz. He was created duke of Berwick in 1687, and at the revolution accompanied his deposed father into France.

During the campaign of 1690, in Ireland, he particularly distinguished himself at the siege of Londonderry, and at the battle of the Boyne, where he had a horse killed under him. In 1703 and 1706 he commanded the French army in Spain, and re-established the affairs of Philip the Fifth, which were in a desperate condition. In consequence of the victory of Almanza, gained in 1707, over the united forces of the English and Imperialists, which contributed to fix Philip on the throne, he was made a grandee of Spain, and knight of the golden fleece, with the title of duke of Liria. He was also created duke and peer of France, under the title of duc de Fitz-James, marshal and knight of the holy ghost.

After the battle of Ramillies, so fatal to the French, his skill and promptitude checked the progress of the victorious army. In 1710 he received a striking proof how highly his military talents were estimated: Marshal Villars, though not quite recovered from the wound he had received at Malplaquet, determined to open the campaign in person; but requested that

marshal Berwick might be joined with him, in terms highly flattering. "It is sufficient to inform him, that the king cannot save his kingdom without a battle, and the wings of the enemy are led by the duke of Marlborough and prince Eugene; it is therefore necessary to oppose to them the best generals in his majesty's service *."

Berwick waved the pretensions of his birth and rank, served under marshal Villars until he was wholly recovered, and then resumed his command in Dauphiny.

In 1719, during the breach between France and Spain, he led the French army against the monarch whom he had contributed to place on the throne, and in one successful campaign curbed the daring efforts of Alberoni, and humbled the pride of the Spanish monarch. This singular war, between the uncle and the nephew, was rendered still more extraordinary by the hostilities between the father and the son. The duke of Liria was a general in the Spanish army opposed to marshal Berwick, and was exhorted by his father to fulfil his duty to the sovereign whom he served.

Berwick was a hearty friend to the act of succession to the throne of France, as estab-

* See History of the House of Austria, vol. i. pt. 2, p. 1207, 1229. Memoires de Villars, tom. ii. p. 107.

lished by the treaty of Utrecht, and for that reason was in high favour with the regent duke of Orleans, who entrusted him with the command of the army against Spain, and appointed him in 1721 governor of Guienne and the south-western provinces which were most exposed to the aggressions of Philip. In his frequent conversations with Mr. Walpole, with whom he lived in habits of the strictest intimacy, he mentioned that act as indispensable for the peace of Europe and the interest of France; and testified his resolution to take a vigorous part in favour of the princes of the blood, should Louis the Fifteenth die without issue.

He was equally convinced that the union between England and France was calculated for the interest of both kingdoms; and he who had been once so active in the service of his brother, the pretender, considered his cause as hopeless, and even hinted to Mr. Walpole his desire to pay his respects to George the First in person*. He experienced much attention from the king and the British cabinet; he obtained, through the mediation of Mr. Walpole, the payment of a pension, with the arrears due to his mother-in-law, lady Sophia Bulkeley; the king also readily granted him licence to visit his mo-

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, April 28, 1727.

ther in England; but he did not venture to avail himself of the permission, as the act of attainder, which could not be reversed, rendered him liable to be arrested and tried for high treason, though the king condescended to demand the opinion of the attorney-general, and even assured marshal Berwick that he would expose himself to no danger.

During the administration of the duke of Bourbon, he was removed from the government of Guienne, on account of his attachment to the house of Orleans, and was never consulted on affairs of state. But he possessed the confidence and esteem of cardinal Fleury, of which Mr. Walpole records a striking instance, and at the same time does honour to the character and conduct of the marshal:

"This being the situation and temper of the cardinal upon the removal of M. le Duc, he thought it necessary, considering the mean opinion the world had of the council in the time of his highness (the duke of Orleans), as well as consistent with the dignity of the government, to increase the number of ministers of state; and his immediate thoughts were to take in the marshals d'Huxelles and Berwick; the first on account of his popularity, being generally esteemed as a good patriot, of plain downright sense and integrity, and well affected

to his country. As to the marshal Berwick, the cardinal has for a great while had a good opinion of his modesty, uprightness, and abilities, having thoughts worthy of his quality, and above the little intrigues of women and sycophants at court, which, to do him justice, he always despised, and which is so agreeable to the cardinal's disposition, that it was no wonder that he put so much confidence in him; besides, the marshal being the only person fit to command the French army, in case of a rupture. But the cardinal having sounded the sentiments of several persons of consideration here, with regard to the admission of marshal Berwick into the council, he found it would by no means be agreeable to the nation, on account of his not being a Frenchman born, and therefore he has endeavoured to make that matter easy to the marshal, who, without doubt, will command the army if there be any occasion; and I suppose is to have some recompense for the loss he suffered by M. le Duc's removing him from the government of Guienne. However, he still continues to live in the country, and I believe his character in general is, that he heartily wishes the continuation of a good understanding between England and France, in opposition to the emperor: that although he is certainly the protector of the Irish officers, who serve in this

country; yet I am persuaded that he has no manner of understanding or cabals with them, or with any of the jacobites, in favour of the pretender, thinking it below him to be concerned in such mean and despicable work. He has, besides, a just opinion and respect for the many great and valuable qualities possessed by his majesty, though it is not to be concluded from hence that he is so good an Englishman but that he would still, in case affairs should ever take such a turn as to occasion a war between England and France, command the French army, in any manner suitable to his quality, that he should be directed, in opposition to his majesty or his dominions, as any Frenchman would do*."

Marshal Berwick passed his days principally in retirement, at his delightful seat of Fitz-James, until he was again called forth to action in 1733, and had the honour of being opposed to prince Eugene. He was killed by a cannon ball at the siege of Philipsburgh, on the 12th of June 1734, in the 64th year of his age.

Marshal Berwick was in private life a man of high integrity and unsullied honour; in his public character, a general of equal coolness and intrepidity. He was fortunate in all his military enterprises, excepting in the disastrous cam-

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, Fontainebleau, Sept. 28, 1726.

paigns in Ireland, when his genius was counteracted by the weak and pusillanimous conduct of his dethroned father, and when his military talents were employed to force upon a free nation a sovereign whom they had deposed.

Montesquieu, in an historical eulogium, which is prefixed to the Memoirs of Berwick, pays a due tribute of applause both to his public and private talents. Speaking of him with the fondness of a friend, who frequented him in his hours of retirement, he says, "It was impossible to see him and not love virtue. I have seen at a distance, in the works of Plutarch, what great men were; in him I behold, at a nearer view, what they are. He had a great fund of religion; no man ever followed more strictly those precepts of the gospel which are most troublesome to men of the world. In a word, no man ever practised religion so much, and talked of it so little."

Berwick was twice married; his first wife was lady Honora de Burgh, daughter of William earl of Clanricard, and widow of general Swarsfield, created earl of Lucan, by James the Second, after the revolution. By her he had one son, James Francis, who formed the Spanish branch of his family, and is often mentioned in the dispatches of lord Harrington and Sir Benjamin Keene, from Madrid, under the title of duke of

Liria. His second wife was Anna, daughter of Henry Bulkeley (son of Thomas viscount Bulkeley) by lady Sophia Steuart, who was lady of the bed-chamber to the exiled queen of England, at St. Germains. By her he had thirteen children, of whom the fourth, Charles, inherited the title and estate of Fitz-James *.

Horace Walpole, the late earl of Orford, paid an elegant tribute of applause and regret to the memory of marshal Berwick, in the person of his grand-daughter mademoiselle de Clermont, (who espoused M. de Vaupilliere), on her visit to Strawberry-hill:

"Shall Britain sigh, while zephyr's softest care
"Wafts to her shore the bright La Vaupilliere?
"Ah! yes: descended from the British throne,
"She views a nymph she must not call her own;
"She sees how dear has Stuart's exile cost,
"By Clermont's charms, and *Berwick's valour lost.*"

* For these Anecdotes have been principally consulted the Correspondence of Mr. Walpole, passim; Memoires de Berwick; Vie de Villars, tom. ii.; and Dictionnaire de la Noblesse, art. Fitz-James.

CHAPTER 16.

1727—1730.

Reconciliation between France and Spain — Dismission of Morville — Rise and Character of Chauvelin — Dissatisfaction of Mr. Walpole — Extract from his Apology on the remaining Period of his Embassy, and the Conclusion of the Treaties of Seville and Vienna — His Return to England — Succeeded by Lord Waldegrave — Mr. Robinson appointed Envoy to the Court of Vienna.

AT this period the long-expected reconciliation between Spain and France took place. The cardinal imparted to Mr. Walpole the whole progress of the negotiation, which he had contrived to take out of Montgon's hands, and conduct by means of the papal nuntios at Madrid and Paris. In communicating, the draughts of the letters from Louis the Fifteenth to the king and queen of Spain, Fleury endeavoured to obviate the impression which this event would make on the British cabinet, by declaring to Mr. Walpole, that he had written to the king of Spain, to testify his regard and friendship for England, and his resolution to maintain the union subsisting between the two kingdoms; adding, that he had likewise endeavoured to dispose his catholic majesty for a reconciliation with England. "To this I made," observes

Mr. Walpole, " no opposition in my discourse with the cardinal, as being understood to be an accommodation of a family difference, as what I have all along appeared to approve, and what is so popular in France, that any dislike to it, on my part, might have had an ill effect upon the cardinal, especially when it is offered without any conditions disadvantageous to his majesty, or that can tend in the least to separate France from England*."

This event was soon followed by another, no less unfavourable to the views and interests of England, the appointment of Chauvelin to the offices of garde des Sçeaux and secretary of State.

As a prelude to this change, the office of chancellor was taken from Armenonville, the father of Morville, and restored to the venerable d' Aguesseau †, who had filled that high station

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, Paris, August 3, 1727.

† Henry Francis d'Aguesseau, descended from an antient family of Saintonges, was son of the intendant of Languedoc, and born at Limoges in 1668.

At the age of twenty-three he so much distinguished himself as avocat-general of Paris, that Talon, president à mortier, said of him, " I would gladly finish as that young man has begun."

In 1700 he was promoted to the office of attorney general; but offended Louis the Fourteenth, by the freedom with which he delivered his sentiments against the Bull *Unigenitus*.

with great integrity under Louis the Fourteenth and the regent, and was dismissed in 1722 by cardinal du Bois. Although the place of chancellor and of garde des sçeaux, or keeper of the seals, were two distinct offices, and the seals were not demanded; yet Armenonville quitted Versailles, in disgust, on the 17th of August, and resigned them to the king, through the hands of his son. The resignation of the father was expected to be followed by the dismission of the son; and Chauvelin, who was to succeed Armenonville as garde des sçeaux, was also designated as the successor of Morville.

Morville had rendered himself disagreeable to the king of Spain by his attatchment to England;

On the death of du Voisin, in 1717, he was created chancellor and garde des sçeaux; but on the following year was deprived of the seals, for his inflexible opposition to the system of Law. He was reinstated in 1720, and again exiled in 1722, for refusing to give precedence to cardinal du Bois.

Like his immortal predecessor, the chancellor de l'Hôpital, he was a man of the strictest honour, integrity and disinterestedness; like him, he was attached to literature, and versed in the study of the mathematics, and, for his skill in that science, was consulted by the English on the reformation of their calendar.

He was now appointed chancellor, but was not reinstated in the office of garde des sçeaux, which was deemed a hardship, because it was the most lucrative post, until the removal of Chauvelin in 1737. In 1750 he resigned the seals on account of his advanced age, and died in the ensuing year.—Dictionnaire de la Noblesse, and Dictionnaire Historique, art. d'Aguesseau.

and on the first overtures of a reconciliation insinuations were conveyed to cardinal Fleury, that his removal from the office of secretary of State, would please their catholic majesties. He had endeavoured to infuse jealousies into the minds of those who were attached to the cardinal; he had likewise personally offended him, by holding private conferences with Montgon, and by caballing with the duke of Bourbon, and forming a scheme to unite the princes of the blood against his administration.

Fleury, impressed with these sentiments, had for some time entertained a resolution to dismiss Morville; but deferred the execution of his design, until he had found a proper person to substitute in his place; and maintained the most inviolable secrecy, from a delicacy to his friend Mr. Walpole, and to avoid exciting cabals in the court. In this state of suspense, Chauvelin was introduced to his notice by marshal d'Huxelles, and other persons attached to the system of Louis the Fourteenth.

Germain Louis Chauvelin, descended from a noble family, distinguished in the military and civil line, was born in 1685. He followed the profession of the Law; and after successive promotions, was, at this period, president à mortier of the parliament of Paris*. He was re-

* Dictionnaire de la Noblesse, art. Chauvelin; Branche de Girsenoy.

markable for quick apprehension, indefatigable application, and facility in transacting business; and possessed pleasing manners, and a conciliating address. "He was," to use the words of Mr. Walpole, "a busy lawyer, of some parts and knowledge; of a most treacherous, false, and ambitious spirit; but, at the same time, of an assiduous, supple, dissembling, and insinuating disposition, where it was his interest to please *." He had fortunately been useful to the cardinal, by his influence in the parliament, and by supplying information relative to the foreign and domestic affairs of France, in which the narrow genius of Morville was deficient. He derived his knowledge principally from some valuable manuscripts, which he purchased with the library of the president Harley, and which he abridged with great skill and assiduity.

He availed himself of the first favourable impressions which his manners and information made on the cardinal, and which were strikingly contrasted with the confined, phlegmatic, and dilatory spirit of Morville; he was forcibly recommended by marshal d'Huxelles and the Pecquets, who were under-secretaries of State, and by other persons who possessed influence over the cardinal. His principles were decidedly hostile to the union between France and

* Mr. Walpole's Apology.

England; and he was no less warmly disposed to renew the antient connection between France and Spain.

The nomination of a man of his character and principles, could not be agreeable to the British cabinet; and Mr. Walpole, who had never experienced any difficulty in his transactions with Morville, expostulated with the cardinal for admitting, into the chief conduct of business, so dangerous an assistant. But though Fleury entertained great personal regard for Mr. Walpole, and was anxious not to displease the British cabinet, yet he was too independent to be controlled in the nomination of his coadjutors. He therefore persisted in his choice; but excused his conduct, by stating the necessity of removing Morville, on account of his incapacity and petty cabals, and the difficulty of finding a person so proper to succeed him as Chauvelin.

When Mr. Walpole adverted to his character and principles, and mentioned him as a creature of marshal d'Huxelles, the cardinal replied; "I am sensible M. de Chauvelin has many enemies, who envy him; but I have made a strict enquiry into his behaviour, and the facts alleged against him, and have no manner of reason to suspect his not being an honest man. Of his capacity nobody can doubt; and you will soon find, notwithstanding any airs the marshal d'Huxelles

may give himself, that M. de Chauvelin will be entirely devoted to my will and directions. I must request you," he added, "to take no notice of M. de Morville's removal, which I have, as yet, mentioned to no one but yourself; although he is to resign this night, you will, with the rest of the ministers, have an audience, as usual, of him, without seeming to know any thing of the matter *."

Fleury renewed, in the strongest manner, assurances of his inviolable attachment to the strict union between the two crowns; and still further to remove Mr. Walpole's apprehensions, caused Chauvelin to declare in his presence, "that he would co-operate under the directions of the cardinal, in supporting the same system and measures, that had been hitherto pursued with such good success; and would endeavour to deserve the intimacy and friendship of the British embassador."

Notwithstanding these professions, Mr. Walpole felt the extreme embarrassment of his situation, as appears from a curious passage in the Diary of lord Waldegrave †, who was waiting

* Mr. Walpole to the duke of Newcastle, August 16th, 1727.

† James, first earl Waldegrave, was son of Henry, baron Waldegrave, of Chewton, in Somersetshire; and distinguished himself for his diplomatic skill, as embassador to the courts of Vienna and Paris. For a further account of him, see Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chapter 38.

at Paris till he could proceed on his embassy to the court of Vienna.

"September 22.—This morning Mr. Walpole went to the cardinal, who gave him fresh instances and assurances of his designing to stand by us in our pretensions about the prince Frederic. Mr. Walpole told the cardinal, every body said that nothing but his answering for his eminence made people believe him in earnest; that the Dutch minister at Madrid said they had nothing else for it; that, in fine, it was the common talk. To which the cardinal answered in obliging terms, and cleared Mr. Walpole from all fears on that account; though Mr. Walpole, walking the day before with Mr. Pesters and me, seemed under a good deal of uneasiness at his own situation; since, should the cardinal prove false, Mr. Walpole having so continually answered for him, would make him liable to pretty severe censures. Mr. Walpole, in a jocular way, told the cardinal, that if his eminency cheated or deceived him, the consequence would be, that he, Mr. Walpole, would be censured, and probably sent to the Tower for five or six months; but his eminence would have that said of him that would hurt his character, and consequently his person, more than any harm that could happen to Mr. Walpole."

In fact, Mr. Walpole foresaw difficulties

which he had to encounter, from the intriguing spirit and hostile principles of Chauvelin, that he was desirous of retiring; 'but he was sensible,' as he says himself, 'that his connection with the ministers at home would not suffer him to resign his station in France, while negotiations of such extent and moment were carrying on there with great activity.'

I cannot better conclude the account of Mr. Walpole's embassy at Paris, and of the complicated negotiations at the congress of Soissons, where he was one of the plenipotentiaries, than in the words of his own Apology.

"It is unnecessary here to enter into a detail of several disagreeable particulars, that occurred to Mr. Walpole's close observation, of M. Chauvelin's intimacy with certain persons, no friends to the good understanding between England and France. His fallacious and equivocal way of talking and writing to different persons, upon matters of great moment, relating to both courts, gave Mr. Walpole great disquiet. The cardinal, indeed, used his utmost endeavours to remove all his jealousies, and redress his complaints; yet Chauvelin, by his address, flattery, and indefatigable attention, to ease and please his eminence, had gained such an interest and credit with him, that the remaining part of Mr. Walpole's ministry in France was disagreeable

and painful. However, the union between England, France, and Holland, continuing firm in all their measures, the precarious and changeable state of the emperor's affairs, (now the payment of subsidies from Spain has been stopped,) made that court extremely uneasy, and desirous to see the queen of Spain more tractable. At last Philip's health was grown so desperate that the queen was alarmed, and caused the preliminaries to be ratified at the Pardo, in March 1728; and the congress of all the ministers concerned, was soon after signified at Soissons.

"It would be tedious to specify the artifices employed there, and particularly the practices of count Sinzendorff, upon the pliant and pacific temper of the cardinal, to create jealousies and divisions among the allies of the Hanover treaty. Those vain attempts had no other effect than to draw the imperial ministers themselves, tired with their disagreeable situation, into a negotiation of a plan for a general peace, with those of the Hanover allies, without the consent and concurrence of the Spanish plenipotentiaries. And although count Sinzendorff would not venture to sign it; yet these separate proceedings so exasperated the Spaniards, who had got intimation of them, that they made the most pressing and reproachful instances to the

imperial ministers to fulfil the articles in their secret engagements, particularly with regard to the marriages between the two families; to which they received nothing but dilatory and evasive answers. Their catholic majesties highly resented this treatment; and, from bitter expostulations, they came, in a manner, to a direct breach with the emperor; and consequently, as the transactions of the Spanish court were usually sudden and violent, they lost no time to discover a disposition to come to a better understanding with England and France.

"The plan of a treaty, for that purpose, was projected by Mr. Patino, prime minister at Madrid, and transmitted from thence to monsieur Chauvelin, (who was thought to have had a private correspondence with that court, separately from the cardinal;) and he having readily adopted it, took care immediately to represent it in so favourable a light to his eminence, as what would put an end to all differences, and make a perfect peace with Spain, that the cardinal, having nothing more at heart, seemed mightily pleased, and flattered himself that it would be agreeable to the British plenipotentiaries, Mr. Stanhope (now lord Harrington), Mr. Poyntz, and Mr. Walpole. But when the project came to be considered by them, they found it composed of articles conceived in terms very loose

and vague with respect to the interest of England, leaving our antient privileges of trade with Spain, and the right for our possession of Gibraltar and Port Mahon, to be contested and decided before other powers. They represented to the cardinal, how impossible it was for them to approve so deficient and imperfect a scheme, letting him know that England had been engaged in a war with Spain, by the siege of Gibraltar, which had made all treaties between those two crowns void; that the first and fundamental step to be taken for a reconciliation, and an absolute peace, must be a specific renewal and confirmation of all treaties, on the same foot, and in as ample a manner, as they had subsisted before the troubles began. His eminence was extremely disturbed and embarrassed, and gave the strongest assurances, that the British plenipotentiaries might depend upon the same steadiness and fidelity, on the part of France, to support them in the discussion of their just rights, as she had shewn in the whole course of the negotiations. But they being too well apprised of the artful designs of Chauvelin, to keep the pretensions of England in an unsettled state, and in a manner at the mercy of France, and of the great power and influence he had gained with the cardinal, which they plainly intimated to his eminence, gave him to

understand, that they could by no means be satisfied with his plausible declaration and assurances; and left him in a very peevish and discontented mood, without coming to any determination, until his majesty's sentiments and instructions upon this subject should be known.

"The conduct of the plenipotentiaries was extremely approved at Hanover and England, and they were directed to draw the plan of a plain, explicit, and decisive treaty, with a renewal and confirmation of all former treaties with Spain, leaving nothing to be discussed and decided by the intervention of other powers; and the disputes relative to captures (which could not possibly be determined by any other way) to be settled, as usual in cases of the like nature, by commissaries to be appointed by Great Britain and Spain.

"The British plenipotentiaries having accordingly framed such a plan, Mr. Stanhope and Mr. Poyntz earnestly pressed Mr. Walpole to go to Versailles, and communicate it to the cardinal, in a particular conference with him alone, and to employ his utmost address and influence, which had so long subsisted and prevailed in the most difficult conjunctures, with his eminence, to induce him to agree to their plan. Mr. Walpole, considering the great ascendant which Chauvelin had gained over the

cardinal, and how strongly he had prepossessed him in favour of another scheme, was diffident, for the first time, of his success, and extremely unwilling to act by himself in a matter of such importance. However, as his colleagues thought there was no other possible means of serving his majesty, in such an exigency, he waited upon his eminence at six o'clock in the morning of a day appointed for that purpose, at Versailles. The cardinal received him with a cheerful countenance, but a civil reproach for having not seen him for a considerable time. Mr. Walpole having then desired and obtained of his eminence an order to his servant not to be interrupted by any visit whatsoever, during his conference with him, (upon the result of which he gave his eminence to understand the good intelligence for the future between England and France, as well as the finishing or prolonging the troubles in Europe, would absolutely depend,) he proceeded to read to his eminence, article by article, the whole plan. This conference not only lasted the whole morning, but Mr. Walpole having dined with his eminence alone, it was continued some hours after. Mr. Chauvelin attempted several times to be admitted, as having earnest business with his eminence; but the valet de chambre*, according to his

* Barjac.

orders, and being ever Mr. Walpole's friend, would not so much as deliver the secretary of State's message to the cardinal while the conference lasted.

"Not to enter into the observations and answers that passed on both sides, in the perusal of the articles, his eminence approved them all, and proposed no material alteration; and with his hand gave Mr. Walpole the most solemn assurances that he would support the project in council with his authority, should there arise any opposition to it.

"It is easy to conceive what satisfaction the success of this conference gave Mr. Walpole's colleagues, whom he had left in a desponding way in the country, and in particular Mr. Poyntz. His dejection of mind had flung him into a nervous fever; but he soon recovered his health and his spirits.

"I cannot omit mentioning an anecdote on this occasion, when Chauvelin could not prevail with the cardinal to make the least alteration in this new plan, marshal d'Uxelles (with whom Chauvelin often previously concerted matters of State, in confidence, independent of the cardinal, and without his knowledge,) upon hearing it read in council, was struck on a heap; and although, seeing the cardinal's firmness in recommending it to the French king, he would not

venture to speak against it; yet, in a week after it was approved, he resigned his place as minister of State, pretending his ill state of health, but telling his particular friends, in private, that he would not sit in council to obey the dictates of an English embassador, and act subservient to the interest of that nation.

"In transmitting to England the project of the treaty, when it was agreed and settled in France, Mr. Walpole would not suffer an account of its having been effectuated by his particular weight and credit with the cardinal, as a merit due to him separately from his colleagues, to be mentioned in their joint dispatch; and therefore this anecdote was known to some few friends only.

"This plan having been sent to Spain, supported by the orders of the cardinal, to Monsieur Brancas, the French embassador, that court immediately acceded to it, which, in consequence, entirely dissolved all manner of connection between the emperor and their catholic majesties, and disposed the first, being disappointed in all his chimerical views, to renew his antient good understanding with his majesty, by a treaty signed at Vienna, March 16, 1731; to which the States acceded in 1732."

Soon after the conclusion of the treaty of Seville, lord Townshend resigned, in consequence

of a misunderstanding with Sir Robert Walpole *. This misunderstanding had deeply affected Mr. Walpole, not only from his obligations and personal attachment to lord Townshend, but from unjust surmises that he was instrumental in fomenting the division, with a view to succeed in the office of secretary of State. He frankly avowed his disapprobation of lord Townshend's violent plans against the emperor; but declared to their common friend, Mr Poyntz, that should his lordship quit his post dissatisfied, no person or consideration in the world should prevail upon him to accept it, if offered to him. He did not belie his promise; but when that unfortunate event took place, declined the offer, and promoted the recommendation of the duke of Newcastle, in favour of his friend and co-adjutor at the congress of Soissons, Mr. Stanhope, afterwards earl of Harrington.

On his resignation of the embassy, Mr. Walpole supported the appointment of lord Waldegrave, who had displayed great skill and abilities in negotiating with the French cabinet while Mr. Walpole was attending his duty in parliament in 1728, and in conducting with equal address, the affairs of England, as embassador at the court of Vienna. "I must own," he observes to his brother, "I think lord Wal-

* See Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 37.

degrave as proper a person, as minister, as could possibly be sent hither; for, besides his having a very good understanding, his supple and inoffensive disposition is the best talent against the artifices of monsieur Chauvelin: for, as his lordship will have caution and prudence enough as to take nothing upon himself without orders, he has at the same time patience and phlegm enough to parry the dangerous attempts and insinuations of the other, without disobliging him *."

His instructions to lord Waldegrave, on this occasion, explain the method which he employed to manage the temper and gain the confidence of Fleury: "I think your lordship has done extremely well to cultivate, if possible, a friendship with M. Chauvelin, because you find that he has such an influence over the cardinal; but as M. Chauvelin's friendship, I believe, is found to be very shallow and *journaliere*, I am of opinion that you should now and then talk very forcibly to the cardinal, and make him the confidence of distinguishing him, with regard to integrity and good intentions, from any other minister. I know he loves that distinction, and, if applied in a proper manner, and on the topic of sincerity, he is liable to flat-

* Correspondence to the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. iii. p. 8.

tery; and you may venture, on a foot of confidence, to go great lengths with him, even with regard to his own sentiments, as well as to the conduct of other ministers in France *."

Mr. Walpole was also highly gratified with rewarding the zeal and fidelity of Mr. Robinson, by obtaining for him the appointment of envoy and plenipotentiary to the court of Vienna, where his address, activity, and prudence, during a period of eighteen years, justified the propriety of the recommendation.

The services of Mr. Walpole, during his embassy at Paris, were highly appreciated by the British cabinet; and the letters, both private and public, of the duke of Newcastle, lord Townshend, and Sir Robert Walpole, are filled with the highest eulogiums on his conduct. It would be endless to enumerate the passages; but an extract from one letter of lord Townshend will suffice: "You have exerted yourself all along with uncommon talents in the management of those important affairs under your care. But as to these last efforts you have made, it is impossible to express the satisfaction your zeal, abilities, and success have given universally. I congratulate you most heartily on your serving your king and your country, with so

* Mr. Walpole to earl Waldegrave, Cockpit, Jan. 14, 1730-1. Waldegrave Papers.

much capacity, and a superior spirit in business. * * * * * * * You will find, by what the duke of Newcastle writes, that the king consents to give you leave to come; but I must take the liberty, at the same time, to tell you, that as all the letters from France are filled with the highest commendations of your extraordinary address, influence, and credit there, so they dread and lament the ill consequences of your absence in this most critical conjuncture, that no one can be capable of supplying your place, and that the business will fall and flag when you are gone *."

* Lord Townshend to Mr. Walpole, Whitehall, Jan. 4, 1727-8.

CHAPTER 17.

1730—1735.

Mr. Walpole appointed Cofferer of the Household — Sent privately to the Hague — Object of his Mission — Nominated Embassador — Difficulty of his Situation — Characters of Slingelandt and Fagel — Views of the Prince of Orange — Mr. Walpole's Account of his Negotiations.

ON his return from the embassy, Mr. Walpole was graciously received by George the Second; and queen Caroline was pleased to express to him her particular satisfaction with his diligence, fidelity, and success, in negotiations of so much perplexity and trouble, and ever afterwards gave him distinguishing marks of her confidence and protection*.

The favour of the king, the protection of the queen, and the ascendancy of his brother, ensured to him a distinguished office in the State; but his unaspiring temper, and dread of exciting jealousy, by the elevation of two brothers to the highest posts of government, induced him to decline the most advantageous offers, and he accepted the post of cofferer of the Household. In this post, as well as from his relationship to the prime minister, he had constant access to

* Mr. Walpole's Apology.

the closet; and whenever he was consulted, always gave his advice with sincerity, and with a freedom which offended the king, and sometimes even displeased his great patroness queen Caroline.

Mr. Walpole had the satisfaction of contributing to the conclusion of the treaty of Vienna, which was retarded by the difficulty of settling the dispute between the emperor and the king, as elector of Hanover, and by the suspicions which the imperial court entertained that the Walpoles were unfavourable to the house of Austria. A letter to Mr. Robinson, at this critical juncture, removed these impressions, and conciliated prince Eugene, who had been principally instrumental in opening and conducting the negotiation.

"The best answer," writes Mr. Robinson to Mr. Walpole, "I can make to the honour of your letter, is to send you a treaty, to which it certainly contributed much. Nothing was more seasonable; and luckily it was seconded by the faithful reports which a courier about that time brought from monsieur Kinsky, concerning yours and Sir Robert Walpole's sentiments. The moment I received your letter I read it to the prince, and can only say, in one word, he was charmed with it. The business is now done, I will not say well or ill. If well, I

desire, sir, you will take to yourself the reputation of it, whatever good I have in me I owe to your example; if ill, I must, as I ought, take to myself the shame of having made no better advantage of what you are pleased, in your letter, to call the intimacy and confidence with which I lived with you for many years at Paris, and of the opportunities I had of knowing your most secret sentiments *."

" Thus," to use the expressions of Mr. Walpole, " the situation of affairs in Europe, which had been flung into the greatest convulsions by the wild and extravagant projects of enterprising ministers, to flatter and satisfy the pride and ambition of certain powers, was, by the firm and prudent conduct of his majesty, brought back to a calm and natural state, without the calamities of a general war. And notwithstanding the impotent efforts of pretended and discontented patriots, to vilify an administration whose employments they wanted, joined with a desperate clan of disaffected Jacobites, to distress a government they would gladly subvert, no prince was ever in a higher point of glory and respect, from all foreign powers, for the steadiness and wisdom of his measures, than his majesty was at

* Mr. Robinson to Mr. Walpole, Vienna, March 20, 1731. Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 100.

this juncture; nor any ministers in greater credit and esteem abroad, than those who were employed in the direction and execution of these measures *."

Although Mr. Walpole had no ostensible part in administration, and did not hold a responsible office, yet his extensive and accurate knowledge of foreign affairs, his profound sense and manly spirit, rendered his advice highly useful. He was consulted by the king, queen Caroline, and his brother, in all affairs of importance; and was employed in drawing up, or revising, the principal memorials, manifestos, and other State papers, which were issued during the remainder of his brother's administration. From 1730, the period when he quitted his embassy at Paris, till 1733, Mr. Walpole remained in England.

During this period, he assisted his brother by his efforts in parliament as well as by co-operating in the transaction of foreign affairs. In the stormy session when the project of the Excise excited such unmerited odium against his brother, he laboured by means of his connections and influence abroad, to counteract the efforts of the opposition in parliament, and the disaffected party in the country. Among other documents of this period is an interesting letter to his friend Baron Gedda at Paris, in which he

* Mr. Walpole's Apology.

exposes and reprobates the unbecoming cabals of the French minister Chavigny with Bolingbroke and his adherents. This letter, evidently written for the purpose of being communicated to the cardinal, produced a considerable effect on his mind, in counteracting the false and exaggerated representations of the French minister, and baffling the hopes which Bolingbroke and the disaffected party entertained of turning the influence of France against Sir Robert Walpole.

" SIR,

" You would do me great injustice if you did not attribute my long silence to so good a friend to the multiplicity of affairs in parliament, and particularly at a time when things have been carried on both sides with so much spirit and vivacity. But I can assure you that notwithstanding the artful representations and hopes of our enemies to get the better, I was never under the least uneasiness for the consequence of these troubles. For as it is well known that the king our master has never had any design, and never will have, to attempt any thing against the liberty and laws of this nation, and his minister never did and never will give any advice contrary to the constitution of the country, and the well-being of the people, it is impossible that the false insinuations of the

disaffected and discontented should have any greater effect than to delude the ignorant and misguided people for the present, until things should be put into a clear and just light.

"The affair of the Excise, although calculated to no other purpose than to procure an honest and fair collection of the duties on Tobacco and Wine, which are really paid by the people, but lost in a great measure to the public on account of the variety of frauds in the collection, occasioned a more than ordinary convulsion in the nation, on account of the groundless suggestions of our enemies, as if every thing necessary for life was to have a new tax upon it, which were artfully stirred up by the multiplicity of merchants that would lose by the correction of frauds, and promoted by the malecontents disappointed in their views. However, this matter was in an honourable manner withdrawn, and the country gentlemen were convinced that the intended Excise was founded on an honest principle to prevent frauds, and with a view to ease them of the burthen of the Land Tax, which they had borne for so many years. The designs of the enemies of the administration, by his majesty's resolution and courage, have proved entirely abortive, and things I think are, notwithstanding the industry used to keep the nation in a ferment, upon as

firm and quiet a footing as ever. I am persuaded, from what you write to me, as well as from the representations I have had of the cardinal's integrity and discretion, that his eminence gave orders to M. Chavigny not to trouble himself any ways in these disturbances; but I can assure you, that notwithstanding these orders, this minister has been as industrious as possible, by underhand management, not only to foment these troubles, but also to make them appear abroad much greater than they are, in order to give the worst impression and opinion of his majesty's affairs; and for that purpose on one side he has constantly frequented those persons that are most inveterate against his majesty's government and administration, acted in a strict confidence with them, and especially with Lord B—ke and his particular intimates, has received his intelligence from them, given the most malicious turns in prejudice of those that serve his majesty, to every thing that has passed in parliament, and constantly alarmed the rest of the foreign ministers, as if the government was in the greatest danger, or at least the administration, and would never stand. He lives, eats, and drinks with the enemies to the king's government, and after a bottle carries his liberties so far as to join with them, as we are informed, in talking high treason.

" No sooner has any body felt the disgrace of the court, but he immediately finds a kind welcome from Mr. Chavigny. Lord Stair, with whose character you are well acquainted, and whose haughty and intriguing conduct has drawn upon him the displeasure of the king, was immediately upon it extremely caressed and taken into the friendship of this minister, notwithstanding his lordship's known antipathy and inveterate aversion to the French nation; and others that have found the same fate for their opposition to the king's measures, have met with the same kindness from Chavigny, as if by their behaviour they had done what would be agreeable to the French court. In short he is, as I hinted before, the creature of lord Bolingbroke, his devoted admirer and disciple, idolises him as the ablest, the honestest, and the best of men; and every body that is no friend to that Lord is a knave or a fool, or the weakest of men, in Mr. Chavigny's eyes, and his constant discourse. In concert with this Lord this French minister has, as we have good reason to believe, undertaken to foment a convulsion in this government and a war in Europe. In order to bring about the first, he encourages all persons and practices against the court, ridicules, blames, and decries all the English ministers, paints them on all occasions as having lost

their parts as well as their credit, as being so odious to the nation, and in so tottering a condition, that their fall is inevitable, extols their enemies as able men and sound patriots, and as having concerted such measures as cannot fail of success. In concert with lord Bolingbroke, he has undertaken, as we are informed, to engage France in a war as soon as possible, as what may embarrass this nation, and in consequence the ministry, extremely. For that purpose he describes us, as well as Holland, in conversation with his confidents, to be embarrassed, and in so weak and divided a condition as not to be able to take any vigorous measures in defence of ourselves, much less to support our allies, if called upon. But to remove all objections he artfully suggests, that in case a blow was struck that does not immediately affect this nation or the low countries, he flatters himself that we shall keep at a distance, shall in effect, on account of our divisions, the small credit of the ministers, and the little resource which he pretends we have in our finances, abandon our allies, and be glad to keep our neck out of the halter. This is a language that he is so fond of, that he does not only hold it to particular persons in confidence, but ventures to talk to the same purpose even to the face of the king's servants;

and in case he is contradicted in his vain and arrogant surmises, he represents the persons that presume to have so much courage as enemies to France, and as such, as only put on a good countenance in a bad cause. In case he is suffered to talk thus impertinently without an answer and with a silent contempt, he immediately plumes himself upon it, thinks himself all triumphant, and looks upon such a silence as a certain concurrence in his opinion. Thus he struts and looks big, swells with the thoughts of a noble war, and supporting the glory of France, which, he says, cannot be done without an immediate war. All this while he continues a certain suppleness and grimace towards some of the ministers, of whom I am one, pretends that he avoids importuning them, (while he is night and day with their enemies), because they are so taken up with parliamentary and other affairs, that he would not incommode them. Thus while this poor creature, as you know he really is, (any otherwise than as he represents so great a sovereign) is acting the part of a charlatan, a part entirely unworthy of the character he bears; and I am persuaded both contrary to the inclination and orders of the cardinal, and M. Chauvelin, he looks upon himself as the most refined, the most capable, and the deepest politician, as being able to create a flame in Europe and a civil war in England.

"In the mean while his artifices and little tricks are thoroughly known and equally despised, neither will any notice be taken of him by way of complaint to his court, or rebuke to himself; and if he has that mighty power which he assumes and does not doubt of effecting, to bring on a war in Europe, we shall patiently expect the blow without being prepared to defend ourselves, and to make our engagements good with our allies. But what is most extraordinary in this unaccountable conduct is, that while every day of his life he acts a part which ought to send him from hence and make us insist upon his being recalled, I am lately told, he has complained of Mr. Pelham's * having held a discourse to the disadvantage of France, and made such an impression on your court to Mr. Pelham's prejudice as if they had thoughts of demanding his recall. This matter having been sounded, is found to be entirely false with regard to the pretended discourse of Mr. Pelham, and indeed it is impossible for any body on all occasions to express himself with more regard than that gentleman does towards the French court, where he has met with particular civilities, and is daily proud of them, nor with more attachment personally towards his eminence and M. Chauvelin. But is it not amazing that such a creature as M. Chavigny, who observes

* Then British Envoy at the court of France.

no measures here; who even is often very free with the person of the cardinal himself, as being the author of all the recent disgrace which France, according to him, suffers by his meek and pacific temper, would intimate any thing to the prejudice of a young gentleman that is by his comportement agreeable to every body in all places."

In October 1733 Mr. Walpole was sent to the Hague on a secret mission of great importance, which occasioned his subsequent nomination to the post of embassador to the States General. The causes which led to this mission will be best related in his own words:

"Upon the death of the king of Poland, the opposite declarations and measures on the part of the emperor and France, in favour of the royal candidates, occasioned a rupture between those two powers, although his majesty and the states had caused the most friendly and earnest representations to be made at the court of Vienna, upon the imprudence of taking any step that might hazard a war with France, on account of a Polish election; a contest entirely foreign to the concerns of England and Holland in their defensive alliance with the emperor. The Dutch found that the imperial court had on this occasion immediately stript the barrier towns of 10,000 men, part of 16,000 they were

obliged by treaty to keep there in time of peace, by removing them to Luxemburgh, and declaring that the maritime powers must take upon themselves the care of the barrier; that the important fortresses of Mons, Aeth and Charleroy, which ought to be garrisoned by the imperial troops, were entirely defenceless, without fortifications, magazines, or men; and that France had engaged the kings of Spain and Sardinia in the war against the emperor. This exposed situation made the ministers of the States think themselves obliged, for their immediate security, to enter into a negotiation with the French embassador at the Hague, for a neutrality, by which it was agreed that the States would not concern themselves in the affairs of the Polish election, nor in the troubles that might be in consequence of it; France agreeing, on her part, not to carry the war into their low countries, nor attack their barrier. This unexpected declaration surprised his majesty; but before it was formed into a resolution, Mr. Walpole, on account of the credit which he was supposed to have with the ministers and members of the States, from his former negotiations at the Hague, and the confidence with which he had acted towards their embassador at Paris, was sent to Holland with instructions to endeavour to divert the States from concluding a

precarious neutrality with France. But the defenceless condition of their frontiers, and the formidable power of France in their neighbourhood, had pushed on that affair so fast, that it was in a manner concluded before his arrival there. However, Mr. Walpole prevailed with the pensionary to get a clause inserted in that act, by which the States reserved to themselves a liberty to fulfil their engagements with the emperor, with whom they had contracted alliances, as well as with France. This left a door for them to take a part to stop the progress of the French arms, when the exigency of affairs and their common danger should make it practicable, in a government so weak and divided.

"In the mean while the imperial court was as solicitous in their instances with his majesty and the States, to join in his defence, as the French were to shew them that the emperor had been the aggressor, by concurring in violent measures with Russia, to interrupt the freedom of the Polish election.

"It being evident that this perplexed situation of affairs must necessarily bring on negotiations of a very nice and difficult nature, Mr. Walpole was ordered again to repair to the Hague, with the character of embassador, to act at this critical juncture in confidence and concert with the States. Cardinal Fleury had caused

the most plausible and pacific declarations to be made in England and Holland, of his readiness to accept the good offices of his majesty and the States, for accommodating the difference between the emperor and France. The imperial court, on the other hand, was as positive and peremptory in rejecting them; not bearing to hearken to any terms, until the maritime powers should have previously declared themselves in his favour, and sent, as guarantees, succours to his assistance, which gave France a great advantage over them, by her apparent disposition towards a peace.

"Mr. Walpole, to whom the late queen was always extremely gracious, endeavoured by his credit with her, to decline the acceptance of an employment, which he foresaw would give him infinite trouble, and was liable to many inconveniences and reproaches, according to the nature of events, and the readiness of a factious party, then in parliament, to condemn all measures, though executed with the greatest fidelity and judgment. But her majesty having promised him her countenance and protection, he undertook this great, but disagreeable office, at this critical juncture."

Considering the situation of Mr. Walpole in England, unincumbered with a responsible office, enjoying the favour of the court, and delighted

with his improvements at Wolterton, it is not a matter of wonder that he accepted with reluctance a post full of embarrassments. The government of the United Provinces was still in a state of discord and anarchy; and the difficulty of conciliating the different interests was increased by the views of the prince of Orange, and the jealousies of the republican party.

His friend pensionary Slingelandt still retained his great influence and authority in the counsels of the republic, and was inclined to promote the union with Great Britain; but he was a martyr to the gout, and his temper naturally warm, exasperated by pain, was become peevish and intractable.

His other friend, the greffier Fagel, in whom he reposed the fullest confidence, and whose mild temper was not soured by age, was equally attached to England; but, by the reserve of Slingelandt, was almost excluded from the knowledge of foreign affairs *.

* In some of his confidential letters to Mr. Trevor, Mr. Walpole contrasts the mild and placid temper of greffier Fagel, with the fretful and inflexible spirit of the pensionary.

Hampden Papers.

"If the pensionary," he says, "had M. Fagel's temper, it would be pleasant to do business; but we must bear with men as they are, and do as well as we can.

"January 23, 1735-6.—I told you, in my last, I had received

William prince of Orange had now attained his majority; and with the fervour of youth, and the elevation of an aspiring mind, ill brooked his exclusion from the power and dignity formerly enjoyed by his family. His views were encouraged by the ardent temper of his consort the princess Anne, eldest daughter of George the Second, and by his expectations of his father-in-law's support. He was, therefore, eager to involve the States in a war with France, that he might be appointed generalissimo of the Dutch forces; a promotion which might lead to the revival of the Stadholdership in his favour. The natural jealousy which the republican party entertained of the house of Orange, was increased, as well by this alliance, as by the imprudent zeal which George the Second displayed in favour of his son-in-law. The French

a peevish letter from the pensionary; I now send you a copy inclosed, with my answer. It is a great pity the pensionary, who is otherwise so great a man, will on any occasion that does not please him fret himself so much.

"October 3-14, 1736.—As to what the two great ministers said to you, they both talked in character. The greffier is so mild in his temper, that he dreads the effect of the least step taken in their distracted government, that is not agreeable to you all: the pensionary is so rough, that he cannot give his real or imaginary reasons, upon a point where he is particularly to act the minister, with common decency. What a pity that such a Billingsgate tongue and temper should belong to such an excellent understanding."

availed themselves of these suspicions, to increase their own party, and thwart the designs of the British cabinet.

The Hague, at this critical juncture, became the centre of business and intrigue; the British embassador at Paris acted principally from the impulse of Mr. Walpole; his correspondence with cardinal Fleury was revived, and the negotiations with the different powers of Europe passed through his hands.

"Not to enter," continues Mr. Walpole in his Apology, "into a detail of the various and interesting transactions, public and secret, that passed at the Hague on the part of the respective powers concerned in this embarrassed state of affairs, Mr. Walpole, perfectly well acquainted with the pusillanimous and pacific temper of the cardinal, took care, in his correspondence and concert with lord Waldegrave, then his majesty's embassador at Paris, that his eminence should be kept under constant apprehensions of Mr. Walpole's being able, by his memorials, and other representations to the ministers and members of the States, of the dangerous consequences to the republic, from the formidable progress of the confederate arms, to engage them at last to take a vigorous part in favour of the emperor as a common cause. And it is certain, that his eminence was so affected and

alarmed with this apprehension, that notwithstanding the artifice of Chauvelin to keep up his spirits, and that the armies of France and her allies continued victorious on all sides, he would not suffer the Spanish and Sardinian forces in Italy, as it had been projected, and was very practicable, to take Mantua, lest it should have animated the maritime powers to declare war in support of the emperor; and his eminence was not easy, until after having set on foot several negotiations in several ways, and at several places, the preliminaries for peace were signed at Vienna in 1735.

"And I believe it may be affirmed, without vanity, that this management between Mr. Walpole and lord Waldegrave, seconded by pensionary Slingelandt, in his letters to the Dutch embassador at Paris, in keeping the cardinal in perpetual agitation and fears of a general war, saved the important city of Mantua, the key of Italy, from falling into the hands of Spain.

"I cannot conclude the Apology for Mr. Walpole's conduct, at this great epoch, without making one observation. His majesty was extremely desirous to give the emperor assistance in this war with France; and it is imagined that count Kinsky flattered the imperial court with such expectations. But the minister, who had the greatest credit with the king, by having

the greatest penetration and judgment in affairs, represented how difficult, if not impracticable, it would have been, after the States had agreed to a neutrality with France, and the kings of Spain and Sardinia had actually joined in a war against the emperor, to have prevailed upon the parliament to grant supplies for carrying on so extensive a war, of which this nation must have borne the greatest, and in a manner the whole burthen; especially as the cause of it was a dispute about a Polish election, and could not be looked upon to be the concern of Great Britain, nor a case in which the emperor had a right to demand succours by virtue of his defensive alliance; and that if the parliament could have been brought into such a war, it was morally impossible that the utmost efforts of this nation, with those of the emperor, could have resisted so powerful a confederacy. His majesty, by the credit and salutary advice of that minister, in which the rest of his servants, in the confidence of affairs, (for, as powerful as he was, he never would let his own opinion, in matters of State, prevail against the majority of them,) was diverted from taking any part but in concert with the States, with a view to bring matters, by their joint good offices, to an accommodation between the belligerent parties; or if the dangerous consequences attending the pro-

gress of the confederate arms, should have sufficiently alarmed the Dutch, and made an impression that might have induced them to join in defence of the emperor, that his majesty should have readily joined with them in a plan of vigorous measures for that purpose.

"However, the king was extremely displeased with this state of an inactive neutrality, in being prevented from giving the emperor assistance, which Mr. Walpole perceived in several conferences he had the honour to have with the late queen, by her majesty's own desire, on this subject; and, as she might be apprehensive that it might diminish Sir Robert Walpole's credit with the king, she would, in an ironical manner, reproach Mr. Walpole, by saying to him, *That Sir Robert would have gone into the war, but you would not let him;* by which Mr. Walpole plainly understood (and let her majesty see that he did,) that it was better his majesty should be displeased with Mr. Walpole, than with Sir Robert; and it is very possible that, for that reason, the queen might, in discourse with the king, have laid the fault of disappointing his majesty's inclinations to succour the emperor upon Mr. Walpole, and that it may have made a lasting impression upon his majesty's mind to his disadvantage.

"But here I cannot forbear adding, that the

late queen was pleased to honour Mr. Walpole with her most gracious approbation of his conduct, by letters constantly wrote with her own hand, during his negotiations at the Hague, while she was regent in England. The good opinion of so wise and judicious a princess, who had always the public good at her heart, not only supported his spirits in the most unpleasant and fatiguing station, but has ever since flattered him with conscious satisfaction of his having done his duty, and the best that could be done, for the service of his majesty and his country, in so great and difficult a conjuncture *."

* Mr. Walpole's Apology.

CHAPTER 18.

1735—1737.

Letter from Mr. Walpole to Queen Caroline — He remonstrates against the premature Communication of the Plan of Pacification to the Imperial Court — Relates his Efforts to re-establish the Union between England and Holland, the Origin of the Secret Convention, and his various Negotiations at the Hague — Extracts from Queen Caroline's Letters to Mr. Walpole — Continuation of Mr. Walpole's Apology — He accompanies the King to Hanover as Secretary of State — Danger of the King in his Passage from Helvoetsluys — Letters from the Princess Amelia and Queen Caroline — Mr. Walpole's Remarks on Sir John Barnard's Bill.

THE interesting correspondence with queen Caroline, to which Mr. Walpole alludes in his Apology, was so frequent, that the letters, if preserved, would fill a volume. Many of these letters have been destroyed; but several fortunately still remain. The greater part were inserted in the Correspondence which accompanies the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole; one, however, which was written at this period, and was not published in that collection, contains a curious account of the origin, progress, and conclusion of the secret convention with cardinal

Fleury*, and Mr. Walpole's transactions at the Hague, and evinces the manly freedom with which he delivered his sentiments, even in direct contradiction to the wishes of the king and queen, and the views of the British cabinet.

Mr. Walpole to Queen Caroline †.

" MADAM,

" The unexpected step in communicating to the imperial court, without a previous concert with the States, the plan of accommodation, seems liable to so many dangerous consequences, and has put me under such difficulties with respect to his majesty's service, that, not knowing where it may affect, I have reserved my sentiments of it for this particular and confidential letter to your majesty only.

" I must beg your majesty's goodness and indulgence to believe that what I am going to say does not proceed from ill-humour, or a disposition to find fault with what is done and cannot be recalled, but from a desire, if possible, to obviate future mischiefs, which, if I rightly apprehend the motives of this measure, will constantly, if care be not taken, embarrass his majesty's affairs.

*. For an account of this secret negotiation, see chap. 44, Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole.

† The draught of this letter, in Mr. Walpole's hand-writing, is without a date; but it was evidently written in the beginning of 1735.

" I must beg your majesty's patience for reading a short account of the rise, progress, and present state of this negotiation, as necessary to put my thoughts into a clear light, and to enable your majesty to judge whether it is better to pursue a plain, regular system, built with strength and caution, by a natural coherence and a proportional relation and dependence of the parts on one another, or by the impulsions of sudden starts and flights, to disorder the whole, and reduce a great work from the hopes of perfection to the hazard of the utmost confusion, which I apprehend may probably prove to be the case from this communication; ready at the same time to be transported with joy if I should, as I hope in God I shall be, mistaken.

" Upon the war breaking out between the emperor and France, on account of the Polish election, the antient confidence and intimacy, (the best guaranty of their mutual interests and security,) between England and Holland, for what reasons I will not enquire at present, was on a very precarious foot, and the measures to be taken at so great a crisis for their common safety and the public good, were entirely disconcerted, and running counter to one another, which induced his majesty to send me hither in October was twelve months, to sound the intentions of the States, and reconcile the counsels

between his majesty and them to one accord at a conjuncture so important.

"This mission was thought by some of his majesty's servants, unacquainted with foreign affairs, as useless and vain, they being persuaded that the Dutch had taken their *ply*, and, by the bias and tendency of their actions, particularly on account of the neutrality for the Low Countries then on foot, were determined, without consulting his majesty, to act in confidence with France.

"Upon my arrival here, I found indeed the principal ministers (whose former ideas and system of politics were, to my knowledge, built upon a strict union between the two nations,) prepossessed with the most unreasonable and unaccountable notions of his majesty's intentions and actions, both with respect to their government and the state of affairs in Europe, and for that reason, being at the same time extremely ill-used, as they thought, by the imperial court, disposed to manage so formidable a neighbour as France is to them. But as yet they were got no farther into a confidence with France than what was necessary to conclude the act of neutrality relating to the Low Countries, which, on account of the barrier towns under the emperor's care being destitute of troops, ammunition, and every thing requisite

for their defence, and for want of a due concert and harmony with England, they considered as the only means to preserve the Low Countries, and consequently themselves. On the other side, I found the antient friends of England and the present establishment fully persuaded that his majesty was entirely under the directions and influence of the imperial court; that he had entered into all the engagements and measures concerted by the emperor, Muscovites and Saxons, for opposing the election of Stanislaus by force, and consequently that he was obliged and determined to take part in the war, had given the emperor private assurances of it, and that by degrees the States were in a manner to be forced into it too, and that the putting a stadholder at the head of their government was part of the scheme concerted by the imperial and British courts. My antient acquaintance and intimacy with the pensionary and the greffier, ministers of undoubted abilities and integrity, and always disposed to make the union between England and Holland the basis of their politics and measures, soon gave me an opportunity to destroy these ill-grounded prejudices and preventions, against his majesty's counsels and measures, by shewing them that his majesty had no other concern than that of good offices in the affair of Poland, was under

no engagements but what were common to the States, and was desirous to act in concert with them in the present great and critical juncture. At the same time I had the pleasure to discover, that the opinion entertained of them in England, of this government having flung themselves absolutely into the hands of France, was equally groundless; and I had the satisfaction of removing these prejudices, on both sides, by degrees to bring matters to a perfect good understanding, and a resolution to pursue the same measures jointly in counsels and actions, with respect to the troubles that threatened the public tranquillity of Europe.

"Having settled this great point, of a mutual harmony between his majesty and the States, and also a particular correspondence between lord Harrington and the pensionary in matters of the most secret nature, I returned to England; and soon after my arrival, the States, in consequence of this harmony, came to a resolution to sound the emperor and France whether our offer of good offices would be accepted. This was transmitted to England for his majesty's concurrence, which I thought so natural a step, in consequence of what I had done, that there could have been no difficulty in it; when, at a meeting of some of his majesty's servants, I was surprised to find most of them, with lord Har-

rington, at the head for various and different reasons, against agreeing with the states in this point. Even the person* on whose opinion and influence I chiefly depended, changed his mind, and so I was left alone, with nobody on my side but lord Wilmington and the duke of Newcastle, when he came to town; but to no purpose. I had nothing to do but to let them know my mind, in foretelling that it would create new jealousies and coolness between the English and Dutch administration; and five weeks time being spent without returning an answer to the resolution of the states, the confidential correspondence which I had settled between lord Harrington and the pensionary was, by sharp expostulations, at once confounded. In the mean time the opposite resolutions and memorials that had passed between the imperial ministers and the republic had brought things, as far as words could go, to the greatest height of animosity and resentment; and a misapprehension of their respective views and designs, in the papers that had passed between England and Holland, had begun to create such strong expostulations as would have occasioned a paper war, instead of an amicable union, between his majesty and the states, had not care been taken

* Sir Robert Walpole.

to put a stop to such extremities, by sending me again over, in last May, to this country, with proper instructions for reconciling the differences between us.

"I arrived here soon after the vote of parliament was passed for reposing an entire confidence in his majesty concerning the augmentation of his forces; and I could not imagine but that the carrying with me such a mark of the parliament's regard for the king, by strengthening his hands in such a manner as to give him the greatest weight and influence in his deliberations about the affairs of Europe, would have made me acceptable to my old friends, and particularly the pensionary. But, on the contrary, in the first visit I made him, confined to his bed with the gout, he looked upon me in such a manner as if I was come to drag him away by force, and place him as a Dutch deputy to fight against France. Having let him cool, and taken opportunities of seeing him alone, (for Mr. Finch* was present at the first visit,) I desired to know, in a quiet way, the occasion of such agonies and transports. His respect and decency for the king's person made him at first very reserved, until I told him it was impossible to cure a disease without knowing the nature

* At that time British envoy at the Hague, until he was superseded by Mr. Walpole.

and symptoms of it. He then, shewing all possible respect in his expressions towards his majesty, gave me to understand, that the principal regents of the government were of opinion, that his majesty was actually concerned in private engagements with the emperor, independent of the states, and had given the strongest assurances to his imperial majesty that he would give him his assistance; that he must temporise for the present, but that the emperor might depend upon his (the king's) declaring in his favour; and that this vote of confidence was procured, not with a view of giving weight to negotiations, but with a design to make use of it for engaging in the war, and force the States into it if possible, along with him; and that the king's bias, as elector, in favour of the emperor, would get the better of all other considerations with regard to England and Holland, and that his majesty's readiness, in that quality, on being the foremost to dispose the empire to declare war against France, when the empire had taken no precautions nor measures to be in a condition to carry it on, was what had increased among the regents the jealousies they had entertained of his majesty's warlike designs.

"I had the happiness to state his majesty's views, in the quality of king as well as elector, in such a light as to undeceive the pensionary

on the extravagant notions unjustly conceived here, and to give him entire satisfaction, by shewing how impossible it was for his majesty, after the siege of fort Kehl, to do otherwise, as a prince of the empire, than he had done; that as king he had sent me once more, with the strongest assurances and instructions to act in perfect union and concert with the states in every step that should be taken in the present state of affairs in Europe; that the vote of confidence could not fail of having the effect for which it was calculated in giving great weight to their joint measures and negotiations; and that all the king desired was, that in consulting together, some means might be found out for keeping inviolably secret what should pass in conferences until things should be brought to a maturity for being communicated as a joint resolution, and that a particular committee should be appointed for the purpose to treat with me. The form of their government would not permit such a distinction to be made among their deputies. However, an oath of secrecy being taken by them, the conferences were carried on without the least discovery of what passed, either by the French or imperial ministers, until the resolution, taken in the name of his majesty and the states, for the offer of good offices, to the respective powers, for accommodating matters, was actually communicated to them.

"It is material to observe here, that the resolution in consequence of the particular confidence established between his majesty and the states, of keeping inviolably secret from all other powers what should pass between his majesty and the states, was equally disagreeable to the imperial and French courts.

"The imperial court was extremely desirous of acting in conjunction with the maritime powers; but as they had no other view but to involve his majesty and the states in the war, perceiving the backwardness of the republic to engage, their whole care and attention was to obtain a particular and previous concert with the king, and by that means to draw the states into the troubles they endeavoured to avoid. Count Uhlfeldt also expressed his great uneasiness to me at the secrecy of the maritime powers, and what he called his majesty's preference of the friendship of the states to that of the emperor; and nothing would content him but my bullying the states into a resolution to declare in favour of the emperor against France.

"The French court, on the other side, was thunderstruck with this union and secrecy of measures established between us. Mr. Fenelon was surprised to the last degree when he saw me present at a conference which the deputies had desired with him, and Mr. Chauvelin ex-

pressed his great concern at it. It destroyed all his hopes of being able to carry on the war as long as he pleased, without any fear or check, while England and Holland were diffident of one another, and had separate measures and views. My old friend, the cardinal, was so alarmed that he made Mr. Van Hoey * dispatch an express to the pensionary, with an account of a confidential discourse his eminence had with him, all turning upon his apprehension of my journey and conduct in Holland.

"Having had the good fortune to settle an entire confidence of counsels and actions between his majesty and the states (which, once for all, madam, I hope your majesty will give me leave to observe, must at all times be absolutely necessary in foreign affairs, for the interest and security of both), I returned to England to give his majesty an account of my conduct, who was pleased, after a short stay, to order me back hither again in the quality of his embassador, with instructions to continue my best endeavours to maintain that confidence which had been so happily restored between his majesty and the states.

"Upon my return hither, having communicated to the pensionary a letter I had received

* The Dutch minister at Paris.

from Mr. Gedda*, intimating, in stronger terms than ever, the cardinal's disposition to bring matters to an accommodation, with a desire to have an opportunity of conversing with me on that subject, Mr. Slingelandt thought this letter, which was ridiculed in England, of moment enough to deserve an answer, which I having drawn, and obtained his majesty's approbation of it and sent it to France, it had such an effect as to lay the foundation of the secret correspondence that has passed, and is advanced so far since between the cardinal and me.

"It is not to the present purpose to enter into the particulars of that secret negotiation, which is so fresh in your majesty's mind; but it may not be amiss to observe, that it took its rise from the effect which the re-establishment of the union between his majesty and the states had upon his eminency's mind. In order to destroy this correspondence, Mr. Chauvelin charged Mr. Fenelon with a particular letter, wrote with the confidence of the French king, the cardinal and himself only, offering to enter into a particular and secret correspondence with Mr. Slingelandt, unknown to every body else, for the immediate and lasting security of the states.

* Swedish envoy at Paris, by whose means Mr. Walpole occasionally carried on a secret correspondence with cardinal Fleury.

"This letter extremely embarrassed the pensionary, being apprehensive, on one side, that if he shewed it to others, considering the then state of affairs, with respect to the emperor, they might have given attention to it, and been inclined to hear what France would say, for the particular interest and safety of the states, which would immediately have put a stop to the correspondence between the cardinal and me, and by degrees might have dissolved the confidence newly established between his majesty and the states.

"On the other side, to sink this letter without communicating it to the principal regents of Holland, at least, while in the mean time my correspondence with the cardinal might come to nothing, or any thing might happen, from the different opinion of measures or otherwise, to occasion a fresh coolness between England and Holland, the pensionary would be exposed to the utmost resentment of the states, to whom he is accountable for all matters relating to their interest that come to his knowledge. However naturally inclined to preserve the good understanding with his majesty, and firmly convinced by the reasons suggested to him, of his majesty having the same intentions with respect to the states, he made no other use of this extraordinary letter and offer from France, but to communicate it to me in confidence, as an instance

of his zeal to strengthen the bond of union between the two nations.

"When the cardinal began to speak out in his letters to me, and required as a condition for his doing it, in plain terms, the most solemn assurances from the pensionary and me, to have the secret inviolably kept, and that it should be agreed on both sides to disavow the whole if any part should get air; this condition embarrassed the pensionary extremely, and he sagaciously observed to me, that if this negotiation should employ a great deal of time, and break off at last without a good issue, this obligation of secrecy would put it out of his power to justify his conduct to the states. However, from the consolation of being under the same engagement with the British minister, he resolved to consent to it, and to take, in the mean time, the proper precautions for his security, by his great skill and address in his management of the states of Holland, and the deputies for foreign affairs. Of all these steps, I have, as they occurred, given an account to lord Harrington; and therefore, I shall touch upon them no farther than is necessary to show, when I come to that point, the danger the pensionary may be exposed to, with respect to himself, and the inconveniences his majesty's interest may be exposed to from a disso-

lution of the confidence between his majesty and the states, which may be occasioned by this separate and untimely communication of the plan to the emperor.

"The pensionary having communicated, under great secrecy, to two or three of the regents of Holland, in general terms, what was transacting with the cardinal, he caused a motion to be made in the states of Holland, founded upon the nature of affairs in the present state of Europe, to show the necessity of keeping the secret in the nogotiations to be held with the British embassador, and consequently of reposing a particular trust in some person or persons, for carrying on that negotiation, which, after some debate, without a formal resolution, was understood to be the pensionary. He then obtained a resolution among the deputies of the states-general for foreign affairs, which concluded with showing, that it would be impossible to negotiate with success unless France could have sufficient security of the secret being kept. This opinion being supported by memorials, delivered by me, the difficulty still remained about the method of doing it, which the pensionary settled, by obtaining, in a private conference with them, a verbal consent that they would permit him to negotiate, in confidence with me, where and in what manner he should

think fit, without giving an account of what passed, until matters should be ripe for their participation, and for taking a resolution upon them; they giving at the same time the strongest assurances not to impart what should be confided to them, either to their colleagues or the states-general, nor to make a report of it to their respective provinces, but by common consent.

"This foundation being laid, and confidence reposed in the pensionary, supported his spirits in our private transactions with the cardinal, and made him resolve not to give the least account of that part of the negotiation to any of the deputies, and not to lay the plan of accommodation before them, until it was finally adjusted with his majesty, and ripe for an immediate resolution, without any time for reflection or alteration; and his great comfort at the same time was, that neither the imperial nor French, nor indeed any of the foreign ministers, would be able in the least to penetrate what had been doing.

"Thus matters stood, when I received an account of the communication having been made first verbally to Kinsky, and since by a messenger dispatched to Mr. Robinson, of the plan of accommodation, without any notice or concert with the pensionary; and here I am to ob-

serve to your majesty, that by a word which fell from count Uhlfeldt, in talking of count Kinsky's courier that passed this way, by way of reproach for my not telling him any thing that had passed, I suspected some such step had been taken. My suspicions are, I find, but too true, and I am flung under the greatest difficulty and perplexity of mind, notwithstanding the discretionary power given me to acquaint the pensionary or not with this step.

" Should I acquaint the pensionary with it, I should cast him into the greatest agonies of despair, to see, after the indefatigable pains taken to re-establish a particular confidence between his majesty and the states, and that at the king's most earnest request, under the seal of secrecy; and after that secrecy had been confirmed by an authority and trust reposed in him, scarce ever known before in this government, and after a hopeful prospect, that by a joint concert of measures previously taken by his majesty and the states, and by holding the same language with firmness and union both to the emperor and France, we should be able to bring those two powers to reasonable terms of accommodation; and after the pensionary had been so jealous and careful of the secret, as not to let any

part of it transpire to any of the states, not even to those concerned in the secret affairs, and indeed to nobody but to two or three of the province of Holland. After all this, to see the secret discovered to one of the parties concerned in the war, from whom it should have been principally kept, until opened in a proper manner by a joint application and influence of his majesty and the states; I say the knowledge of such a communication must needs cast him into the greatest agony, with respect to himself, as being exposed, if the communication should, as most things do, transpire at Vienna, to the utmost danger of censure and reproaches, to say no worse, from his masters, for having kept them in the dark so long about a business of such moment, of which the emperor is sooner apprised than they. And with respect to the public, and particularly the union between his majesty and the states, should it ever be known that the discovery of the secret was untimely made by his majesty's servants to the emperor, it must needs weaken the confidence that was so happily established here, by calling to mind the former impressions and preventions, as if the king could not venture to do any thing without the approbation and influence of the emperor, the great inconveniences of which opinion to his majesty's affairs are too obvious, as

well as disagreeable to repeat. Into this notion I am afraid the pensionary himself would infallibly fall, if he should be told that this weakness, if I may call it so, proceeded from a bullying menace from count Kinsky, of declaring all the treaties with England void.

" These melancholy reflections, flowing from the nature of the thing, suggested another difficulty against my communicating to the pensionary this affair in the manner suggested to me by lord Harrington, which was, that the pensionary might think himself obliged, after what has passed, for his own justification and security, to acquaint the deputies for secret affairs with it, that he may wash his hands of all the inconveniences which might follow from such a measure taken without his consent or knowledge.

" On the other side, when I considered the great risk the pensionary would run of censure and reproach from this government, if, while we were managing the secret with respect to his own regents, the communication of it to the court of Vienna should in the mean time get air, as most things that pass there do, and be known here before he had informed the deputies of it; it would be a cruel thing, after the zeal he has exerted for his majesty's service, to leave him in that ignorance, and not enable him to take the

necessary precautions for his own safety, after all the pains taken and address used by him to conceal the secret, for fear of ill consequences, even from his own masters; especially since count Uhlfeldt might have made him the same reproach, as he did to me, of being so reserved after count Kinsky's courier was past by Vienna.

"These considerations determined me, without acquainting the pensionary with the communication of the plan having been made from England to the court of Vienna, to lead him, if possible, by some other means, into a way that might induce him to take the necessary precautions for his own security, by deferring no longer to let the deputies for secret affairs into the general knowledge of the heads of accommodation, so that they might not be able to reproach him with his reservedness towards them, in case Monsieur Bruynix* should be able to discover the confidence that has been made to Mr. Kinsky or Robinson, or that it should come to be known by any other channel. Accordingly, having received, by the same post, orders from lord Harrington, that the plan, when adjusted here, should, before it be offered, be transmitted to his majesty for his approbation, when

* The Dutch minister at Vienna.

I acquainted the pensionary with these orders. I suggested to him whether it might not be time to break to the deputies for secret affairs, in confidence, the substance of the plan, since they appeared extremely impatient, as I had been told, to know something; and I pressed this affair the more, because I was under, as he knew, an engagement to make the same confidence to the prince of Orange, and his affairs called him immediately to Frise for three weeks, and I would gladly discharge my promise to his highness before he went, since he was to be absent so long. The pensionary, with his usual penetration, combined this hint, and the orders upon which I founded it, with the courier that lately passed by here to Vienna from count Kinsky, and expressed his apprehensions of our having communicated this affair to the imperial court without any concert with the states. He said he saw he was to be the sacrifice of this affair, which would come to nothing, that he was *entre l'enclume et le marteau*; that it was plain his majesty could do nothing without the emperor, and that that plan was not to be finally adjusted until the king had received the sentiments and approbation of his imperial majesty upon it; adding other things, though with all personal deference and veneration for his majesty, relating to the consequences of this step, that I do not

care to remember. Having avoided, as much as I could, the discussion of such a disagreeable subject, I kept to the point of obtaining his permission, that I might let the prince of Orange know what I was engaged to do; to which the pensionary consented, and said that he would also, but verbally only, communicate to the deputies, under the greatest secrecy, the substance or heads of the plan.

"This is the situation of this great affair, for which I beg ten thousand pardons, in giving your majesty so much trouble; and I hope, from your known goodness, to have your indulgence and forgiveness, while I add a few observations upon the whole:

"1°. I am afraid that the emperor, having obtained this confidence, by the means of a menace from such a child in business as Kinsky, far from appearing to take it kindly, will shew at first great reservedness; will, with much seeming reluctance and reproach, at last give an answer; will require some addition to the cessions to be made him, and a reduction of those to be made to others; and insist as a condition of his acceptance, that the maritime powers shall declare, first, that they will engage in the war on his behalf, if the terms of the plan to be resumed, according to his will, shall not

be complied with by the allies in a certain time.

"2°. If this condition should be demanded by the emperor, and application shall be made by the king to the States to consent to it, they will absolutely refuse it. And being fully persuaded, by the emperor's conduct, that his chief view is to lead them into a war, they would be apprehensive that this condition is required with no other design, and that when the emperor has obtained that, he will take care to prevent the peace.

"3°. From hence it will be imagined here, as well as from the favourable disposition towards the emperor in England, that instead of his majesty and the states acting in concert and with firmness, to dispose the emperor, as well as the allies, to agree to the terms of peace, the concert will be transferred from the states to the imperial court; and the imperial and English, instead of the English and Dutch ministers, will act together, which, by degrees, will create a difference between England and Holland, and insensibly fling the Dutch into a confidence with France.

"Lastly, the system so absolutely necessary for preserving the balance of Europe, and consequently the liberties and commerce of the British and Dutch nations, by a perfect harmony

and union of councils, will be crumbled to nothing. These are my apprehensions, which I hope in God the wisdom and steadiness of his majesty's counsels will entirely disappoint."

The sincerity and freedom which are so remarkably displayed in this letter, seem to have offended the king, and even displeased the queen; for, in a letter to his brother, written about this period, Mr. Walpole observes, "I am extremely sorry to find that the dress of my letters to the queen is not liked, although the matter is approved. I solemnly protest to you, I do not affect that free stile; but I can no more write otherwise than I can tell how to dress my person better than I do."

The irritable temper of George the Second was not easily conciliated; but the queen, whose character was more mild and condescending, was soon reconciled to his frankness, and treated him with more confidence than before. A few of her letters are still preserved at Wolterton, from which are inserted some extracts, to shew the extreme condescension of that amiable princess, and the high confidence which she reposed in Mr. Walpole*.

"Richmond, May 21, (June 1,) 1734.—I am

* These letters were written in French, and in the translation I have endeavoured to retain the ease and familiarity of the original.

greatly obliged to you for your letters; they are received with pleasure. I make no doubt but you will be satisfied with the answer of to-day; and I flatter myself that your affairs there are in a good train. I congratulate you on the success of your election: I wish the same success to that of the county. Yorkshire does not go so well; although all hopes of success are not yet lost. In all other respects every thing goes here according to our wishes.

"My daughter appears contented with her situation. I flatter myself that she will give satisfaction more and more. I entreat you to propose to the pensionary my ptisan as a remedy for the gout, with which he is so grievously afflicted. I cannot but interest myself for the life and health of a person of his merit. I trust that my daughter will find in him a friend, and she will always receive strict orders to do nothing without his advice, and I beg you will tell him so. I do not make you any compliments; you know me too well, sir, not to be assured that I am always the same for you.

CAROLINE."

"I shewed your letter to the chancellor, who would have known nothing without me. Write, I beseech you, in the same manner."

"Richmond, June 15, 1734.—I begin with the happy news that you will soon see your

family, on condition that you return as soon as your *Superieur* shall judge necessary. Having thus given my orders, I must thank you for what you say in your letter, concerning what I wrote to you about. You know my sentiments for you; and that, notwithstanding your grumbling, I highly esteem you. I pity the poor pensionary more, because his disorder gives him lowness of spirits as well as bodily pain. In short, it is necessary to take men as God has made them, and overlook their frailties as we hope God will overlook ours.

"Sir Robert will inform you of our affairs, as well foreign as domestic. I leave it to a better hand. He is returned, as you well know, in good humour. He complains less than others, and does not give credit to all the ill reports which are spread of Anne. It appears to me that the gentlemen of Holland might pay their respects to her, although she is in the house of the prince of Orange; not as his wife, but as the king's daughter. It strikes me that this would take away all subject of dispute from the ladies. You know that things are changed in Holland since the time of the princess Mary. She saluted only married women, and single ladies now demand it. The best way to avoid all disputes would be to salute none. The English ladies might wait upon her in private. The

French embassador was, I believe, mistaken, when he spoke of a visit to his wife. I do not believe that Mrs. Walpole ever received one from the French princesses. As for saluting her, that is proper."

"Kensington, Oct. 18, 1734.—I have received three of your letters with pleasure, as I do every thing which comes from the best heart and the most honest man I know. I will send you by Anne my answer to that which I received yesterday. She is very sensible and prudent, and has in many things my approbation.

"I now return to answer that of the 4th. I laughed heartily at the prohibition of not appearing at court, and no less at the history of Henry IV. * * * * *

"I do not see the danger of my daughter's lying-in at the Hague; she will not be in any one's way; and a lying-in cannot be dangerous to a government, nor give jealousy, especially if she and the prince of Orange conduct themselves with propriety and discretion; and I believe I can answer for both. It is desired that she should lye-in in Holland; she is thus snatched from my care. I submit to it, however, because it is reasonable; but what reason can there be to remove her still further from me? to make her lye-in in a village, without succour, without assistance, not to reckon the alarms I

shall experience after her delivery *. * * * * * In regard to her conduct, I am convinced she will endeavour to gain the esteem of all; and if her manners have any effect, she will render herself beloved. But enough of this business.

"I believe we shall soon have an account of the king of Prussia's death; he is in a most deplorable state. Sir Robert will have informed you that your advice has been followed, and that the man † who is sent appears to be a person of merit; he has succeeded in other affairs, and I sincerely hope he will have the same good fortune in this, which is of the greatest consequence.

"The bishop of Namur ‡, from his discourse, appears to me light-headed: we will endeavour to send him away as soon as possible. * * * will deliver this letter, and will acquaint the prince of Orange that my daughter departs on

* Some of the leading men in Holland seem to have been alarmed lest the princess of Orange should lye-in in England, and remonstrated with Mr. Walpole on the subject.

† She alludes to the secret negotiation just opened between cardinal Fleury and Mr. Walpole, and to the mission of Jannel to the Hague. See Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 44.

‡ For the character and intrigues of Strickland, bishop of Namur, who was sent to England as an agent of the emperor, to overturn the Walpole administration, see Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, ibid. See also the spirited letter which Mr. Walpole wrote to the queen on this subject, Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 198.

Monday. She goes by Harwich, which is the nearest passage.

"Fritz* is now returned to his good behaviour. We have written for the character of the princess of D. and I intreat you to make inquiries concerning the person, age, understanding, and disposition of the princess of Wirtemberg. Serious thoughts are entertained of marrying him. Make the same inquiries concerning the princess of Gotha. * * * * *

"Here is, my good friend, a long letter; but that which Anne will bring will be still longer. Do not fall asleep in reading it, since it comes from a good friend."

Queen Caroline fully appreciated the abilities and integrity of Mr. Walpole; and, convinced, from long experience, of his diplomatic talents, recommended him to the king as the fittest person to fill the office of secretary of state. The motives which induced Mr. Walpole to decline this station will best appear from his own narrative: "In 1736," he writes in his Apology, "when the king was preparing to go to Hanover, lord Harrington having fallen under

* The prince of Wales.

† Augusta, princess of Saxe Gotha, whom he afterwards married.

‡ The princess Anne, in several of her letters, also rallies Mr. Walpole for sleeping occasionally at the queen's Sunday evening parties.

their majesties' displeasure, the queen let Sir Robert Walpole know that his majesty was resolved to remove his lordship from being secretary of state, and pointed at Mr. Walpole's succeeding him in his room. But Mr. Walpole, sensible of his own inabilities to discharge so great a trust, and of the envy it would create in seeing two brothers employed in the two principal stations of the government; and being desirous to prevent a division among the ministers, which is always in this country attended with disagreeable consequences, begged his brother not to give any attention to so kind an insinuation from her majesty in his behalf. The queen at last was pleased to tell Mr. Walpole, that his majesty would not suffer lord Harrington to wait upon him again at Hanover; that if his lordship continued secretary of state, he (Mr. Walpole) must attend the king as minister of state to his electoral dominions. Mr. Walpole would gladly have been excused that great and honourable office, for the same reasons, apprehending that if any disagreeable events should happen during his majesty's residence abroad, that the two brothers, and particularly Sir Robert Walpole (right or wrong,) would be answerable for the ill consequences. However, he found it impossible to refuse such particular tokens of their majesties' kindness

and good opinion of him; and having, under the auspices of the late queen's goodness, attended and obeyed his majesty's commands seven months at Hanover, in dispatching the public business, he had the good fortune to conduct himself so as to meet with his majesty's approbation, without the least frown or reproof during the whole time of his ministry. The king was pleased to express his satisfaction for his behaviour often to his ministers and other considerable persons at Hanover, as well as to her majesty and his servants upon his return to England."

During his residence at Hanover in the capacity of secretary of state, he maintained, in addition to his official communications, a confidential correspondence with Sir Robert Walpole, on the state of foreign affairs. The interesting letters which passed between the two brothers are inserted in the correspondence annexed to the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole; and the history of foreign transactions during the same period is also detailed in that work, which renders it unnecessary to repeat the account.

In December Mr. Walpole quitted Hanover, and accompanied the king to Helvoetsluys, where they were detained by contrary winds. At length the king, impatient to depart, ordered Sir Charles Wager to put to sea, which the

admiral declining on account of an approaching storm, his majesty replied, "I have never seen a storm," and repeated his commands in so peremptory a manner that Sir Charles was obliged to obey. The king embarked on board the royal yacht, and sailed under convoy of several men of war. They had scarcely got out to sea before a storm arose, which dispersed the ships; several were driven on the coast of England; the Louisa was wrecked, and it was supposed the yacht could not weather the storm. So great was the alarm, that the cabinet council met at the duke of Devonshire's, steward of the household, and preparation was made to issue the proclamation for the accession of the prince of Wales.

On Sunday morning, the queen being at St. James's chapel, a messenger brought a letter announcing the safe arrival of the king at Helvoetsluys. Lord Lifford, who had just returned from walking in the garden, met the messenger, took the packet, went into the church, and delivered it to the queen, saying, "Here is news from the king!" All present were filled with apprehension; the queen was alarmed, and her hand shook so much that she could not open the letter. The duke of Grafton accordingly broke the seal, and immediately declared that the king was safe. This good news was instantly circulated, the service, which had been suspended, was continued, and satisfaction restored.

We give two letters from the princess Amelia, to Mr. Walpole. The first will display the amiable familiarity with which he was treated by the princesses, the second the general alarm at the king's danger, and the joy at the news of his safety.

"The hopes of the wind's changing hath retained me from answering your's sooner, and thanking you for your last. We are all here very uneasy and peevish at the obstinacy of the south-west wind, and we would compound heartily at another time to keep it for years together provided it would change now, and we had the pleasure of seeing you all here in good health. One talks of nothing else but weather, which you may imagine, my good Horace, Permis* does not the least teize one with. He asks one more question, and now and then frights one with his hasty entrances of a Monday morning. Est-il permis de demander s'il y a des nouvelles du Roy, that one dreads he should have had some intelligence of something bad. Sir Robert of a Monday gives us hopes the wind is good, and even goes so far that he can tell where the king will land, and seems pretty positive; but after enquiries it is captain Jackson that assured him of it, and he is an able man at

* A cant name for the duke of Newcastle, from his usual form of address, "Est-il permis, &c.?"

his guess at sea. The duke of Grafton says all this is nothing, provided he is safe, and stares at the weathercock. This is our daily bread, and I may safely say we have heard nothing else these four weeks. If this should last longer I shall not be able to talk of any thing but astronomy, which does not fit my genius at all. Then we play of evenings in mama's room. There one hears debates of strength and reasoning; how far the new and full or quarters of the moon have influence over the changing of winds; and mama is always of the side of what is likeliest to make you come over soon. Thank God, mama's spirits are always so good that she will hardly ever believe but what she likes.

"This is the way we go on here. I hope your dish of coffee in the afternoon at madame Hattorf's, goes down with some such instructive conversation. Good bye, good Mr. Walpole."

"December 28.—You have been very good, and obliging, my good Mr. Walpole, to take the trouble of writing to me, and I assure you my joy is too great to be exprest, that you are all safe at Helvoet. What mama underwent ever since Friday last, can't be imagined; for she never was easy since she heard that the sloop of the English secretary's office was come here with so much difficulty, and that they had left you all at sea. But a Sunday morning, before nine,

Sir Robert came to mama to give her the dreadful account of the three men of war being come, and lord Augustus's ship without masts or sails; then you may imagine what we all felt. We went to church as usual, and about two the messenger came in, and made not only mama and her children happy, but indeed every body. The consternation was great before, and they seemed all to dread to hear some bad news; but now pray be careful, and don't get out till you are sure of seeing our sweet faces, and then we will all make you as welcome as we can; for I cannot afford any more to be so frightened, for we are all still half dead.

"I pitied poor Mrs. Walpole extremely; but I saw her yesterday, and we thanked God heartily together that you are all safe. Sir Robert hath been very childish, for he drunk more than he should upon the arrival of the messenger, and felt something of the gout that same night; but he is perfectly well again. I hunted with him yesterday at Richmond, and he was in excellent spirits.

"I thank you, dear Horace, for letting me know so exactly how my sister does; I am very happy she is so well. Mama commands me to make you her compliments: Caroline desires her's to be given you also, and I remain your sincere friend upon land, but hate you at sea;

for you take my stomach and rest away, and I love both eating and sleeping."

He was honoured at the same time with a letter from queen Caroline:

"St. James's, 11-23 Jan. 1736-7.—I received, with great gratitude, the letter containing your kind wishes. The king, as I trust, will soon arrive. * * * * * *

"You may judge of our alarms: you may believe they were much greater than yours, who were exposed to the danger. I am under great uneasiness for Sir Charles Wager.

"I am charmed with your memorial; I have given it to your brother, who will communicate it to the duke of Newcastle. He wishes you to continue your work, that he may know your sentiments. You will believe me, when I tell you of my impatience for your return; you will always find me the same."

Mr. Walpole accompanied the king to England, and attended the whole difficult and stormy session, which commenced on the 1st of February 1737.

The principal transactions which occupied and embarrassed the ministry, were the bills respecting the tumults at Edinburgh, Sir John Barnard's scheme for reducing the interest of the national debt, the play-house bill, and the application to parliament for augmenting the

revenue of the prince of Wales. Among the correspondence and papers of Mr. Walpole, which are not published in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, I find no additional information on these interesting subjects, except on the scheme of Sir John Barnard. Two letters from Mr. Walpole to Mr. Trevor explain the nature and principle of the bill; they unfold the mysterious conduct, and display the embarrassments of Sir Robert Walpole, during the progress of a measure, in regard to which the friends of the minister were divided, and even Mr. Walpole was found in the majority against his brother.

"April 1, 1737.—I send you inclosed, although I suppose you may have seen it before, Sir John Barnard's scheme. It was debated on Monday last, and the impracticability, compulsion, and consequently the injustice of it, was fully exposed by various speeches; and at last in an ample and ingenious manner by Sir William Yonge, who concluded by what was candid and voluntary; he had no objection to the offering to the proprietors of the redeemable debts carrying 4 per cent. the accepting of 3 per cent. per annum, irredeemable for fourteen years, by a voluntary subscription, and the coming to another resolution for authorising his majesty to take in subscriptions in the exchequer for annuities carrying 3 per cent. These two

propositions were, after some debate, in which my brother Walpole concurred, or rather acquiesced, as what was more fair and just than Sir John Barnard's, which, in every part, was compulsive, (and indeed to put an end to the bank,) passed in a committee without a division.

"The report being made of these resolutions on Monday morning, those that were against the redemption of the debts, or reducing them from 4 to 3 per cent. moved to have the consideration adjourned for a fortnight. After some debate the house divided, and it was carried in the negative by a great majority. It was a very extraordinary division with respect to persons: my brother Walpole and Sir William Yonge voted for the adjournment; Mr. Pelham and I voted against it; and so it happened in many other instances among persons related to one another in the house, who never separated before; and as none of the Treasury could be named for bringing in the bill, that is left to Sir John Barnard and friends, &c. Particular people that are affected, and especially those in the city, are much hurt, and complain loudly; and I don't doubt they will make their friends uneasy abroad, the consequences of which will be, that those that are frightened so far as to sell their stocks will be bit at last; for in all likelihood their advisers will get into their places."

"Cockpit, April 29, 1737.—I am now to return you my particular thanks for your favour of the 19th, relating to the proposal for continuing the redemption of the national debt, by offering to the creditors that have 4 per cent. an immediate term of 3 per cent. or opening books for taking in subscriptions for annuities at 3 per cent. These plain propositions, thus stated, shews there is no need to have recourse to any reasoning on the justice or right, on the part of the public, to take this step, if prudent, on account of political considerations; for it is no more than pursuing the same method used to bring the national interest from 6 to 5 per cent. and from 5 to 4 per cent. founded upon the clauses of redemption contained in the acts of parliament made when the money was borrowed, which clauses were inserted at the request of the lenders, who then thought it an advantage to be redeemable. And therefore, whatever the pamphlets may say, of which I have read some, the public, in this case, make no alterations in their contracts; but follow a right they have by their contracts with the proprietors of stocks."

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After fully justifying the principle of the bill, he adds; "But to conclude, I do allow that the unpopularity of those that are concerned, who are *legions*, is so great, and consequently their

resentment will be so violent, when they feel that policy and prudence (among the great variety of ill-humours that prevail with people of rank, to the prejudice of the government,) makes it well deserve consideration, whether these plain propositions of an offer of redemption, and a right for redemption, should be pushed and pass into a bill, at present; especially since Sir Robert Walpole, who I take to be the best judge of us all, as to what is most feasible, and most politic for the sake of the whole, in pecuniary matters, continues to be still so much against it, and will make such an opposition to it as will leave no room to doubt of his sincerity in this affair."

In a letter also to the princess of Orange, Mr. Walpole relates the general satisfaction in the city on the rejection of the bill, which fully displays the policy of Sir Robert Walpole, in counteracting the specious scheme of the redemption. A general illumination took place in the city, and the mob were with difficulty prevented from pulling down or setting fire to Sir John Barnard's house; a warning to those who, in the instance of the excise, inflamed the passions of the people, and who would now have experienced, themselves, the dreadful effects of popular indignation, had they not been protected by the officers of government.

CHAPTER 19

1736—1737.

Embarrassments of Mr. Walpole from the Views of the Prince of Orange — Arrangements relating to the Jointure of the Princess of Orange — Correspondence with Sir Robert Walpole and the Princess on that Subject — Application of the Prince of Orange to obtain Promotion in the Dutch Army — Extracts of Letters from the Princess to Mr. Walpole, and from Mr. Walpole to the Queen — Correspondence of Mr. Walpole on the Illness and Death of Queen Caroline.

IN addition to the difficulties of his public station at the Hague, Mr. Walpole experienced great embarrassments from the views of the prince of Orange, which were supported by the unceasing importunities of the princess. The first object of embarrassment was the settlement of the princess's jointure, the circumstances of which are best explained in his own words.

Mr. Walpole to Sir Robert Walpole.

"Dear Brother, Hague, Oct. 17-28, 1735.

"I am much embarrassed by my commission relating to the princess royal's jointure; the case is this:

"By the marriage articles the princess royal is to have a real security in lands for her jointure, and the remaining 40,000*l.* is not to be

paid until that security be obtained. By the laws of this country it is necessary that the lands should be registered to become a real security, and in those cases the 40^{me} denier, or 40th penny, is paid to government. The prince of Orange pretends an exemption from the payment of this 40th penny, as belonging of right to his family, which is disputed by the States: for this reason the registering is suspended.

"It has been proposed, that application should be made to the States for permitting these lands to be registered, for a security to her royal highness, without prejudice to either side. The best and most able lawyers say it cannot possibly be any prejudice to the prince of Orange's right; and lord Hardwicke has given the same opinion, and I am ordered to sound the principal regents, to know whether they will come into it. In the mean time his highness declares, that he will, by his friends, oppose, in the States, the granting the permission for enregistering, *sans prejudice*; and if I proceed, there will break out an open opposition between the king and the prince. If I continue to stand still, I do not pursue my orders; and if I give the reason for standing still, which is, that the prince will oppose the enregisterment, I presume his majesty will be extremely angry with his highness for such an unreasonable and unjust proceeding.

"In the mean time, they ask that the 40,000*l.* should be put out at interest, and the prince should receive the benefit of it; so that although he cannot have the money until the security for the jointure is given, he is to have the use of that money, or the interest of it, without giving that security; which being once fixed in that manner, do you think he will ever consent to give the real security, that is, to enregister the lands? And therefore I submit it to you, without quoting me for it, to consider whether the interest of the 40,000*l.* should not attend the contract relating to it, that is, to be received and reserved for the use of his highness, as soon as the real security is given for the jointure; or else the princess royal, in case of any accident to the prince, will have nothing certain for her jointure of 10,000*l.* per ann. and for the repayment of her portion if there be no children, but this bare 40,000*l.*; the lands will go for the payment of personal debts, and the princess's pretensions will be considered as other personal creditors, and no otherwise.

"The truth of the matter is, I am afraid, that his highness has contracted great debts upon his obligatory notes, and daily contracts more; and he will find money as long as his lands are free; but as soon as they are tied up for a real security, nobody will lend him any

more money, and his present creditors will press to be repaid.

"But what am I to do in this case? I desire your advice. All that has passed is in the secretary's office; the princess royal is infatuated with the prince, and they are both angry with me for not concurring in the most unjust proceeding; while, in the mean time, for fear of disobliging them, or of making them disoblige the king, I forbear doing my duty. Take a serious minute to consider this affair, which perplexes me much."

Many letters passed on this subject, between the queen, the princess of Orange, and Mr. Walpole, before any final arrangement could be made; and the business was principally directed in consequence of his advice. He experienced, however, great anxiety, from the unbending temper of the prince, who was displeased with the expedient to secure the jointure of the princess, in a manner which might prevent him from raising money on his landed property. This expedient was to obtain the consent of the States to register the contracts, by which the jointure was secured on certain estates, without prejudice to the right of an exemption from the payment of the fortieth penny, claimed by the house of Orange. The prince even accused Mr. Walpole of a breach of his promise

in divulging this expedient, as appears from a letter of the princess:

"Loo, 14th August.—Having found, by the conversation that M. d'Aylva related to me, that you had been surprised at the prince's seeming to reject the expedient you thought of, I would not omit putting you in mind of the promise you made him, not to name it till he had consulted whether he could consent to it. I am entirely convinced that he cannot agree to it, without running the risk of the greatest inconveniences; so that without staying for his return, I must desire you, good Mr. Walpole, to think of it no more. I must own, I should think it a terrible circumstance to have my future security be a pretence of hurting him in present, and think it much better rather to venture not to be so easy as I could, in case he should die, than to find us both uneasy while together. I cannot imagine that papa or mama should be displeased if he cannot submit in this point, which certainly is only by necessity, and depend too much upon their justice to imagine that it should be possible. Mama writes me word that they are going this week to put out the money at interest; that I am very glad of, and believe for the rest there will be nothing to be done but to trust to the prince, not seeing any other way to finish this troublesome affair.

I hear you have some thoughts of coming here, if your business will permit it; I shall always be glad to see my old friend Horace, provided he leaves the embassador at home, who I must continually quarrel with."

Mr. Walpole was too much chagrined with the conduct of the prince of Orange to be conciliated by the compliments contained in this letter, and justified himself against the imputation of having broken his promise, in a style of manly resentment, which does honour to his feelings.

Mr. Walpole to the Princess of Orange.

"MADAM, Hague, August 30, 1735.

"Although I can have no greater honour than that of hearing from your royal highness, I must own I was extremely concerned at the receipt of your letter by M. Brinckman, charging me with having acted contrary to a promise I had made to the prince of Orange; a thing I never remember to have done towards the most ordinary persons, much less would I be guilty of such a crime with respect to his most serene highness, whose personal great qualities and merit (not to mention other very obvious reasons,) have engaged my utmost attachment and veneration. I am sure there must have been some great mistake in imagining I ever promised him not to mention the expedient

about enregistering the acts; and if his most serene highness had been regularly informed by his ministers of what had passed between them and me, it is impossible that I should have done it, or that any body could think that I had. I do not indeed remember that any thing like it passed between the prince and me; but the state of facts will make it plain that there must have been some misunderstanding in entertaining a notion of my having made any such promise."

He then enters into a minute detail of the whole transaction between him and the prince's commissaries, which is too long to be inserted, and concludes, "This being a plain and true deduction of this affair, in which I have taken no step without the knowledge of the prince's commissaries, who I ought to presume had constantly given his most serene highness an account of what had passed between them and me, I appeal to your royal highness, from the nature of the thing, whether I could possibly promise not to mention the expedient proposed for securing your jointure, and for saving, at the same time, the just pretensions of his highness.

"The prince's commissaries were acquainted with the expedient when first mentioned; the prince's commissaries had a long conference in

my presence with the lawyer we had consulted about it: they desired to have, and had a copy of that lawyer's opinion in which that expedient was contained, by a letter from M. Dayrolle and me; they returned an answer to it, and it was thereupon agreed and understood, that this whole affair should be referred to their majesty's consideration and sentiments; and the said commissaries often expressed great impatience at the delay in my receiving an answer from the king's ministers.

"I say I take the liberty to appeal to your royal highness, whether these facts do not undoubtedly prove that there must be some mistake in thinking that I had promised not to mention the expedient, and that I do not deserve to be charged with having broken my promise to the prince."

He accompanied this justification with a more private and conciliatory letter, in which he says, "The vindication of my own honour, by undoubted facts, insensibly drew my letter into a greater length than I intended. After all is said, I am at a great loss to know what to do in your royal highness's affair. The prince is, I do not doubt, impatient and solicitous to have the 40,000*l.* put to interest. If I press that affair, I am apprehensive that I shall be asked from England, what proposals I had made ac-

cording to orders, in forwarding the expedient. I have the materials for a memorial ready; but since your royal highness's letter I have taken no step in it. I wish you would direct me what I am to do, and what I am to say, when I shall be called upon by the secretary of State to know what I have done. If his most serene highness will please to direct some of his ministers to draw out the reasons he has against this expedient, for enabling him to execute the marriage articles, I shall readily lay them before their majesties in the best manner I can. Pray, madam, what can I do more? I would willingly do every thing in my power to shew that I am," &c.

This tedious affair, after much consultation and delay, was at length finally arranged, by vesting the money in the English funds; and the princess of Orange does justice to the good offices of Mr. Walpole.

"Lewarde, Feb. 7, 1736.—Finally, Horace, you have honoured me with a letter, and it was high time, for I began to think great people, and quantity of business, had quite made me be forgot; but I should be in the wrong to find fault, after the pretty conduct you have had; and seriously I return you thanks, with all my heart, for having taken care to have the proper method settled for putting out the 40,000 pounds

at interest, which, I believe, without you, would never have been done, since it has been about these six months, and which I hope will immediately be put in execution."

"Groningen, 12th May.—Though you have been indeed the most lazy correspondent that ever I knew, my good Horace, since you have been in England, I hope you will mend, now you are at the Hague; and therefore I would not defer thanking you, for the consideration you sent, about the placing the 40,000 pounds, which the prince and I have submitted to, and have sent to England the proper memorial as you had directed."

The next object of embarrasment to Mr. Walpole, arose from the extreme eagerness of the prince of Orange to obtain promotion in the army of the republic, which his sanguine disposition led him to consider as a step towards the rank of generalissimo, and the revival of the stadtholdership; for which reason his attempts were opposed by the republican party. The princess entered eagerly into his views, and supported his application to the king, by her importunities to the queen, and to Mr. Walpole. A few extracts from her letters will shew the unabating perseverance with which she urged the request.

The Princess of Orange to Mr. Walpole.

" Dieren, July 4.—I was very glad to see by your letter, my good Mr. Walpole, that you was got safe at your journey's end, and that you had had so happy and quick a passage. I rejoice that you left papa and the whole family in good health, and thank you for letting me know what I always have so much at heart. The prince bids me make you his compliments, and will be obliged to you if you will make use of your good offices, in what regards his interest during your stay at the Hague, especially touching his promotion, which lately has given occasion to so much discourse. He is either willing to write you all the particulars that have passed about this affair lately, or if you like it better, to send you some person that may set you entirely *au fait* about it; and I believe every impartial body will tell you the violent republicans have found little applause, as to their last resolution, even in their own provinces."

" Breda, Nov. 14.—Finding by your last letter my good Mr. Walpole, that you are ready to pass your good offices in papa's name, for the prince, in the affair of the promotion, I must desire you to take the time, now the States of Holland are assembled, to speak to those members of credit you think proper, and to tell them that though papa desires nothing for the prince that could give them any uneasiness, he cannot

see, with indifference, that some among them would exclude him entirely out of the army, in which all his ancestors have always been employed. And without my putting any words in your mouth, I am sure your eloquence will find matter enough to exert itself. If you please to speak warmly to them, count de Randwyck, intending to be at the Hague in a few days, will deliver you a letter from the prince, and speak to you more at large upon this subject; but I write this, in order that no time might be lost, if you pleased to prepare matters."

The answer of Mr. Walpole, and two of his letters to the queen, will exhibit the difficulties under which he laboured, and the frankness with which he delivered his opinion.

"MADAM, Hague, Nov. 9. 1737.

"* * * I suppose your royal highness will have seen what I have wrote to the prince of Orange, in answer to his most obliging letter, inclosing to me a copy of the clear and instructive deduction, which his highness sent some time since to the queen, of all that has passed for his being promoted to the generalship.

"If the voice of reason and justice could prevail, I think there could be no difficulty in the affair. But I find (I am sorry to say it) that unaccountable prejudices and animosities seem to have a greater influence than ever here

to his highness's disadvantage; too great, I am afraid, to be removed by any thing that I can say with any authority whatsoever at this time; and I must not conceal from your royal highness, that there are those whose zeal and affection for the prince, and his interest in every respect cannot be questioned, that think his majesty's name will rather increase than diminish the spirit of opposition to his highness's just pretensions in the present disposition of the States relating to the promotions in the army.

"I can sincerely assure your royal highness that this disagreeable observation does not proceed from any backwardness, on my part, to serve the prince. I have nothing to manage here. There is nothing at present depending relating to his majesty's particular service, or my own credit, that should check my zeal and inclination to promote the prince's interest to the utmost of my power. Nay, there is nothing wherein my credit, as his majesty's embassador, can be better employed, if there be the least prospect of its being successful, than in being exerted for the advancement of his most serene highness, according to his dignity, and to the justice he desires in the army. Nothing, madam, could do me more honour, nor indeed pleasure, than to be the useful instrument of so good and meritorious an office.

"The queen's, your royal highness's, and the prince of Orange's commands, not to say any thing of my own attachment and zeal to promote any thing that concerns his highness's honour or interest, cannot suffer me to be cold or indifferent in a matter of this nature; and I shall, in consequence of these powerful motives, (having hinted my apprehensions, founded upon the better judgment of others,) take proper opportunities to speak to the persons recommended to me by the prince, in the manner that shall seem the most probable to forward and obtain what his most serene highness desires, and certainly deserves."

Mr. Walpole to Queen Caroline.

"MADAM, Hague, Nov. 5, 1737.

"Since I had the honour to write to your majesty, by last post, Mr. Duncan has delivered to me a letter from the prince of Orange, inclosing a copy of what his highness wrote to your majesty, relating to his promotion in the army; desiring me, at the same time, to speak in his behalf, to be general of the infantry, to the pensionary, Mr. Opdam, and others, and not to hearken, at first, to any expedient that may be proposed for his accepting a commission of a lower degree.

"The prince's reasons for what he desires, founded upon the dignity of his own situation, as governor of three provinces, and upon antient

practice and examples in his own family, are put indeed in the clearest and an unanswerable manner. But the misfortune is, that he has to do with an unreasonable, and at the same time a most powerful opposition; and they, who have a right to vote, will be themselves judges of the reasons for which they give their vote. And these reasons are often such as have no relation to the thing in question; but are founded upon personal preventions, jealousies, and particular views, either of a public or private nature, which they will not openly own, but from which they will not be brought to depart. And I am afraid, madam, this is a good deal the state of the present case.

"The opposition to his highness's promotion, proceeding from some such motives, is stronger than ever; and, indeed, some of his enemies are so violent, that no reasons or considerations will ever move them. Notwithstanding that, there might be some hopes of serving the prince at a proper juncture; but (I am sorry to say it) the number of his friends, not only in this province, where the most powerful towns will always be against him, but also in the other provinces, even where he is governor, is extremely diminished; several of them having taken the other side; and others, who wish him and his cause well, are grown very cool and indifferent, from reasons mentioned in my last to your majesty.

" However, in obedience to your majesty's and the prince's commands, (not to say any thing of my particular respect and attachment to the princess royal and his highness,) my best offices shall not be wanting to serve him as he desires. I have thought fit, for that end, to consult the good old greffier Fagel, and to let him know how well pleased the king and your majesty would be at the prince of Orange's being promoted according to his dignity. Mr. Fagel immediately, with great concern, made the same melancholy observation, that the credit and interest of his highness was very low among the States; and the few friends he had left appeared silent and indifferent about him. I then told him, that, perhaps, if I should exert myself in his behalf, as what would be agreeable to the king and your majesty, for his being promoted to the generalship of the foot, it might recover and encourage his friends, and damp the spirits of his enemies. The greffier replied, that he would not pretend to put his opinion in competition with their majesties, or to divert them from what they might think would be of service to the prince; and then he would have changed the discourse. But I having pressed him, as a friend, for his private sentiments, he at last told me, as such, that he really thought my intervention and good offices amongst the regents, in

behalf of the prince, might alarm his enemies, and animate them to take some step to his disadvantage, at a time when there is a general discontent against his highness, for having opposed the late proposition for a promotion of the officers in the army, and making it absolutely depend upon his becoming general of the foot, in which the province of Gueldre, where he is stadtholder, has given a different opinion. Therefore the greffier seemed to be of opinion, that it would be better to let this matter sleep at present, and expect a more favourable opportunity for pushing the prince's pretensions.

"However, I will take some proper occasion to talk to the pensionary, and to sound Mr. Opdam on this matter, in a manner that shall at least, I hope, do his highness no harm. But then I am afraid, if I do not talk in his majesty's name, and in a certain tone, the prince will be made to believe that he is not supported as he ought to be, by the king's embassador; and yet I am confident, as things stand at present here, that even a proposition for making the prince lieutenant-general only, would not pass; and therefore there is no fear of its being offered, I believe, by way of composition."

Mr. Walpole to the Queen.

"MADAM, Hague, Nov. 12, 1737.

"Since I did myself the honour to write to

your majesty last, I have received a letter from the princess royal, of which I take the liberty to send you a copy inclosed. Upon the receipt of it, I immediately consulted my old friend, the greffier Fagel, whose good sense, prudence, and knowledge of the disposition of the States, as well as his affection and zeal for the prince of Orange's service, are unquestionable; and he told me, in a free but confidential manner, that if I should espouse the prince of Orange's pretensions to the generalat, in the name of the king, and with the warmth proposed by her royal highness, at this time, when the prince's opposition to the promotion of officers as far as lieutenant-generals, had put the spirits here into so great a fermentation, I should do the prince no service; but, perhaps, on the contrary, animate his enemies to cabal, in order to procure a resolution to exclude him for ever from a command fit for him in the army. This way of reasoning has been confirmed to me by others, who are naturally disposed to favour the prince's pretensions, but have been of late dissatisfied with the counsels and conduct he has for some time pursued.

"The case, about the promotions in the army, stands at present thus: A proposition was made by the deputies of Overyssel, to the States

General, for making a general promotion in the army, with a clause, that no promotion of generals should be made for the future, otherwise than according to their rank, without an unanimity of the States. This clause was certainly inserted by the enemies of the prince, with a view of excluding him for ever out of the army. And, indeed, it is so exceptionable and odious, that there was no doubt but it would be rejected by the majority of the provinces, at the same time desirous that a promotion should be made of the officers of the army. But the prince having not only opposed that clause, but the whole promotion; (insisting that the rest of the officers should not be advanced, unless he was made general of the foot), upon a presumption, I suppose, that the four provinces, which had declared two years ago in favour of his advancement, would have been of the same opinion, found himself extremely mistaken; for whether his credit and interest is much lessened since that time, or the concern which affected the many friends and relations of such a number of officers, stopt in their preferment on account of his highness, was more prevalent, 'tis certain his opposition on this occasion caused a general discontent in all the provinces, even in those that were before most attached to his service,

not excepting Friesland, although they were so complaisant there as to take a resolution agreeable to the sentiments and desire of his highness.

"The prince, no doubt, flattered himself with the expectations that Guelderland, Overyssel, Utrecht, and Groningen, would have taken resolutions agreeable to that of Frise. But as to Guelderland, where the prince's interest and credit was some years since very great, your majesty will see, by the inclosed copy of the letter they wrote to the province of Frise, in answer to one they received from those states on this subject, that however desirous they may be to have his highness advanced to the generalship, they would not make it a condition of the promotion of the other officers in the army. As to Overyssel, their States have not met yet on this matter; but as the proposition, so prejudicial to his highness, was made by their deputies to the States General, 'tis thought that the same deputies will think themselves sufficiently authorised to conclude in favour of the same promotion. Utrecht has referred themselves to a former resolution, which was indeed rather favourable to the prince than otherwise. But as the town of Utrecht is most prevalent in that province, and by no means in the interest of the prince, I am told that the province of Holland,

can make that town do as they please; and as to Groningen, that province is so equally divided that they can come to no resolution; and, consequently, their vote can go for nothing.

"This being the situation of matters, your majesty sees that the prince stands alone, with one province only avowedly declaring for him; and, as I have hinted before, most of his own friends in that province would have been glad that his highness would not have insisted upon their coming to the resolution they have taken, much against their real opinions, purely to oblige him; foreseeing, that it would create a great deal of ill-will towards the prince. It is indeed true, that as long as the province of Frise only stands out, the States cannot come to a resolution, agreeable to the first proposition, because an unanimity is requisite for that purpose: but, as the greffier has observed to me, should I, in the king's name, insist warmly upon the prince's promotion, (though never so just and reasonable in itself,) the enemies of the prince finding so general a coolness and even a dissatisfaction towards the prince, from his behaviour on this occasion, by the advice, 'tis thought, of no one person but Mr. Duncan, may endeavour to carry some very disagreeable and shocking point in opposition to my offices in behalf of his highness.

"However, in obedience to your majesty's commands, and the earnest solicitations of her royal highness and the prince of Orange, I will endeavour to serve him in all that is in my power; although I foresee, that my fate will be, that I shall not be able, at this time, and in this affair, to do him any service. And yet her royal and his most serene highness will conclude, that it was my want of zeal, and not the nature of the thing, and other circumstances that I don't care to name, that keep the prince from his being advanced according to his dignity and merit."

Soon after the date of this letter, queen Caroline being seized with a mortal complaint, Mr. Walpole was commissioned to impart the melancholy tidings to the princess of Orange, and was instructed to prevent her, in the first moment of her surprise and distraction, from taking a voyage to England: "I write this," says Sir Robert Walpole, "on purpose to desire that you will use all your reasoning, skill and influence to prevent any such attempt. It is said you must assume authority, although you have none. You will inform her of the whole truth, as you shall, in discretion, think it will have a good or bad effect for the present purpose. I am told she is now at Gumberg, where you must go as soon as you receive this. A messenger is

sent with this, that you may see this before the post arrives *."

Mr. Walpole executed this commission; and in two letters to Mr. Trevor, describes his visit to the princess.

"DEAR SIR, Breda, Dec. 1, 1737.

"My wife will give you an account of my motions hither, since I left you yesterday in the evening. I am extremely obliged to you for the extracts of your letters, relating to the great important crisis which keeps all the world in suspense between hopes and fears. God grant the decision may be answerable to our ardent desires!

"The princess royal having received, by the last mail, a full account of the illness and cause of it, with some comfortable news at the conclusion, and there being no fever, and the pulse being good, agreeably to what I had read to her out of my brother Walpole's letter to me by Bill, she is grown tolerably easy, especially since the extracts of your letters correspond with what she has heard from others. I have not yet perceived any token of her having had the least design of going to England; and I have not, as you will easily imagine, mentioned any thing of that nature to her royal highness; but

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 502.

I must be secure about that point before I leave this place, for which I have not yet fixed any time; but shall expect the arrival of Friday's letter first. * * * *

" Breda, Dec. 3, 1737, at night.

"DEAR SIR,

" Bill, the messenger, brought me your favour of nine o'clock last night, with your postscript dated at midnight, about five this afternoon, while I was at dinner with the prince of Orange. I left the table to read my letters with fear and trembling, and I must own I cannot recover from the alarm they have given me. Having agreed with the prince to apprise him first, that he might break it to the princess in case the news was very bad; I had scarce perused my letters before her royal highness's constant attention, and as it were prophetic concern, sent to know whether my courier was not come; and the prince was obliged immediately to go to her to intimate that things were desperate; I followed, after some interval, and read to her the ostensible extract of your brother's letter, and one more comfortable from Mr. Grill, as well as Mrs. Colledge's to Mrs. Walpole. Mrs. Hines's was in a great measure agreeable to your brother's melancholy account; but I took care, in reading it, to omit some melancholy expressions, and even lines, particularly what

relates to the prayers in the church, and the archbishop's daily attendance on the queen. However, we wanted cold water, and also cordials, to support her spirits; and after I left her, she has fallen into a flood of tears and loud lamentations, crying out, She must and would go into England to receive the benediction of the queen. The prince of Orange, whom I had apprised of the orders I had received to prevent her by all means from taking the journey, used all his eloquence and influence to divert her from such a thought; and I believe, at this present writing, she will content herself with sending M. Gravestein thither, so as to go by the mail, or, in case that be gone before his arrival, I am to give an order for another boat, which I shall not refuse to do, because it is gaining so much time; and I think she will be in a manner tied down to stay here until she hears from M. Gravestein, and by that time the great and doubtful crisis will be over, I am afraid, in a manner that will occasion more general affliction in Great Britain, and in Europe, than ever happened in any age. But I can no more. However, I am well in body, and so you may assure my wife and Molly; in all conditions ever yours most affectionately."

The queen died on the 20th of November, O. S.; and, soon after the news of this melan-

choly event, Mr. Walpole returned to England, and records in a letter to Mr. Trevor, of December 23, 1737, an instance of the king's extreme sensibility, and affliction for her irreparable loss.*

* * * * * *

"The king was so kind as to enquire often after my arrival, in a manner as if he was willing to see me (for as yet he has seen none but the ministers of State and his own children); when I was at the closet-door, he told my brother he could not do it. But I having seen the two older princesses, and waited upon them, at their desire, before eleven o'clock; while I was with the princess Caroline, word was brought that his majesty was coming to their apartment (as he usually does as soon as he is drest), which made me retire. I was immediately called back and left alone with his majesty, whose inexpressible grief burst out into a torrent of tears, as put me, at the same time, into such a situation as to want comfort as much as his majesty, and I had almost like to have retired; but he made me walk with him, and talked to me all the while amidst the strongest commendations of

* The character of queen Caroline, and the circumstances of her death, are related in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, ch. 48.

the poor queen; giving me an account of his way of living with her, the great use she was to to him in all conditions of life, of her behaviour during the time of her illness, and particularly of the character which she gave of my brother Walpole, which his majesty was pleased to enlarge upon in the most confidential manner; concluding, that the queen did him so much justice as to recommend him (the king), his children, and the kingdom, to the care of Sir Robert Walpole, which, though an encomium too great for any subject with respect to his sovereign, his majesty was pleased to dwell upon for some time with great satisfaction; adding, that although his value and esteem for Sir Robert Walpole was certainly greater on account of the queen's judicious apostrophe of him, yet he knew that he, himself, had made him his chosen minister, as superior and preferable to all his subjects.

"All this, indeed, is too much to be repeated by me, so nearly related as I am; and indeed nothing but my particular friendship for you would have drawn it from me. I cannot, however, conclude this, without letting you know that notwithstanding the malicious insinuations that have been scattered about the immense riches left by the queen, her receiver's accounts,

now all the bills are brought in, make her in debt 5,700*l.*; and, by what I hear from undoubted hands concerning her effects, after the balance is paid, she may have died worth about 20,000*l.* all which she has given to the king by will.

" Dec. 19, 1737.—The States letter on the queen's death was very cordial, and so moving, that the lecture of it flung his majesty into a flood of tears. He has not yet seen company; it was thought he would have taken a resolution to do it after the interment, which was mournful, decent, and orderly; but the king is still undetermined about it, and cannot bear to have it mentioned to him."

We find among the Walpole papers, the following memorandum on the death of his great patroness, which shews her extraordinary resignation and fortitude.

Mem^dum.—By Horatio, first Lord Walpole.

" The last letter I received from the late queen, was dated from St. James's, the 8-19 of November, 1737, in which there were these following remarkable expressions.

" Je vous écris de ma charmante bibliotéque dans le parc.

" Je suis comme (l'Opera dit) dans une paix profonde; je ne me soucie pas du reste de monde, vous excepté."

" These lines I did not comprehend until I learnt by your next post, that her majesty was extremely ill. She declared the nature of her illness two days after writing this letter, and died Nov. 20, Dec. 1, 1737."

CHAPTER 20.

1738—1739.

Mr. Walpole supports the Spanish Convention in Parliament—Returns to the Hague—Disgusted with his Situation—Quits his Embassy—Honourable Testimony of the States to his good Conduct.

DURING 1738, Mr. Walpole continued to reside principally at the Hague, and was employed in conducting the negotiations which succeeded the signature of the pacification between the emperor and France. In consequence of the disputes with Spain, and the conclusion of the convention, he attended his duty in parliament, in the stormy session of 1739, and supported the pacific arrangements of his brother. He drew up several interesting memorials on this subject, still extant among his papers, and moved the address for the approbation of the convention, which he defended in an able speech.*

At the close of the session he returned to the Hague, for the last time. He had now been six years embassador, and though highly respected by the leading men of the republic, yet he was extremely disgusted with his situation, and had long expressed his desire to return, and his

* See Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. lii.

resolution never again to accept any foreign employment. His disgust was heightened by the narrow policy of George the Second, who at this great crisis suffered his antipathy to the king of Prussia, and his electoral views, to preponderate against the interests of Great Britain and of Europe.

The principality of East Friesland, which is contiguous to the province of Groningen, was at this period governed by Charles Everard, last sovereign of his line. Being without issue, the succession was liable to be contested by the king of Prussia and George the Second; by the king of Prussia, in virtue of an expectative made by the emperor Leopold in 1694, to the house of Brandenburgh; by George the Second, in virtue of a family compact between prince Christian Everard and the family of Brunswick, in 1691. The States General were exceedingly alarmed lest it should fall either to the king of Prussia, or to the king as elector of Hanover; and the eventual succession became an object of the most serious negotiation. The simple question was, whether East Friesland should be considered as a male or a feminine fief? If a male fief, it lapsed to the house of Brandenburgh, by the grant of the emperor Leopold; if a feminine fief, it might be conferred by the emperor on some prince of the female line: at

all events the house of Brunswick seemed to have no just and rightful claim.

In the commencement of 1739, the greffier Fagel, and Vanderheim, who had succeeded Slingelandt * in the office of pensionary, proposed to Mr. Walpole, that the king of England, in conjunction with the States, should endeavour to procure the entail of the principality on some prince of the female branch, with the consent of the reigning sovereign, and the approbation of the emperor, to be guarantied by the king and the States. Mr. Walpole laid the proposal before the king, at the recommendation of the Dutch ministers. But George the Second, anxious to secure the principality for himself, rejected the scheme; and as he could not brook the inter-

* M. Slingelandt died in 1736, during the absence of Mr. Walpole; an event which, from their long and tried friendship, afflicted him extremely. He received the account from his friend and secretary, Mr. Trevor, who observes, "However indisposed I may be for writing, through the surprise and affliction I am at present under, I am sensible I should be wholly inexcusable before your excellency, not only as the king's embassador to the States General, but even as a personal friend of M. Slingelandt, the grand pensionary of Holland, did I not acquaint you, with the utmost expedition, with so important an event, both with respect to the affairs of your excellency's station, and to those of the public in general, as the loss of that able and worthy minister, which happened this morning about five o'clock, so suddenly, that the servant who always attended him at nights, had but just warning enough to call his lady to be a witness of it." Hague, Dec. 1, 1736.

ference of his English ministers in electoral concerns, expressed great resentment against Mr. Walpole. By this ill-judged policy the king displeased both the king of Prussia and the States, at a time when England was actually engaged in a war with Spain, and threatened with hostilities by France. He did not, however, attain his object; for Frederic the Second occupied East Friesland on the death of the prince, and retained it in opposition to the remonstrances both of the king of England and the States.

The conduct of the king towards Mr. Trevor, his secretary, added to the dissatisfaction of Mr. Walpole.

Since the commencement of his embassy at the Hague, Mr. Robert Trevor*, half-brother of

* Mr. Robert Trevor, afterwards lord Hampden, was third son of Thomas lord Trevor, by his second wife Anne, daughter of Robert Wilding, esq. and widow of Sir Robert Barnard, bart. of Huntingdonshire. He was born in 1701, and educated in a private school at Bishops Stratford, where he made a considerable proficiency in classical literature, and was removed in the nineteenth year of his age, to Queen's College, in the university of Oxford. Being afterwards a candidate for a fellowship of All Souls, the votes were equally divided between him and another student, and both parties underwent a strict examination by the archbishop of Canterbury's chaplain, who decided in favour of Mr. Trevor. He was early initiated in diplomatic business, being introduced into the secretary of State's office in 1729, and in 1734 appointed se-

lord Trevor, had served him in the capacity of private secretary; he was likewise secretary to the embassy, and, during his absence, had acted as charge d'affaires, with great discretion and ability. Mr. Walpole destined him as his successor in the quality of envoy and plenipotentiary, and obtained the promise from his brother and lord Harrington, to whose department the embassy belonged. But the king had conceived a prejudice against Mr. Trevor, and after throwing many difficulties in the way of the appointment, instead of conferring the titles of envoy and plenipotentiary, would only nominate him envoy. Mr. Trevor, offended with this slight, refused to accept the post on that condition.

During this struggle, Sir Robert Walpole and the chancellor condemned Mr. Walpole's extreme eagerness to return, and represented the urgent necessity of his continuance in Holland at this critical juncture; but no solicitations could induce him to remain. In reply to their instances, he expressed his uneasiness at the disappointment of his friend Mr. Trevor; "not only," he says, "on account of my affection for him, who has many good and rare qualities, but for the sake of the public." He adverted,

cretary to the embassy at the Hague, where he gained the esteem and full confidence of Mr. Walpole, who promoted him with all his influence.

with concern, to the conduct of the king, in regard to continental politics, and complained that "low, partial electoral notions, are able to stop or confound the best conducted project for the public." "We have," he adds, "jealousies of one power, aversions to another prince, contempt for this or that state; we have pretensions or desires of our own, that must either be made ingredients in any scheme for the public good, or that scheme must not go on. * * *

"In the mean time those that serve abroad have no comfort; they are liked and disliked, not according to their fidelity and diligence, but by humour and fancy; and were I not your brother, you would soon hear, nay, perhaps you do hear, of me, with my friend Trevor, in the list of those who are of no consequence but to receive their pay, which is grudged them. And therefore I must freely own to you, that dangers and difficulties from abroad do not discourage me; but the not seeing the least likelihood of right measures being pursued at home, to obviate or withstand them, although such measures might be found out, that is what disheartens me. * * * * * *

"While I am employed, I will serve with the utmost diligence; but I see nothing but disgrace and disappointments, and, as the world ever judges by events, and not by conduct, I

am sensible of what I am to apprehend from my continuance here. However, I should be glad to know how long this servitude is to endure, that I may take my measures accordingly *."

Several of the other letters which passed between Mr. Walpole and his brother, as well as those of Mr. Trevor to Mr. Walpole, are published in the Correspondence annexed to the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole †. But some letters to Mr. Trevor, preserved in the Hampden Papers, which were not given in that publication, will still further display his esteem for Mr. Trevor, and the exertions which he employed in his favour.

"DEAR TREVOR, Hague, Sept. 1, 1739.

"Your letter of the 14th ‡, and one I received from my brother at the same time, on your account, gave me the greatest affliction, for several reasons, that are too many, and which would only serve to increase the melancholy scene between us, to expatiate upon. I must only desire you to be persuaded, that I have used my utmost instances and credit with my brother, and that he has exerted, in the best and strongest

* Correspondence to the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. iii. p. 535, 538.

† Vol. iii.

‡ See this and the following letters here alluded to in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. iii. p. 532, 539.

manner he could, his with the king, to obtain what you desire, and what you so much deserve. And, lest any impression, which is too usual in cases of disappointment, should catch hold of you, to make you imagine (though you will forbear saying it) the contrary, I send you inclosed the letter I received from my brother on this occasion, but in the greatest confidence, desiring you will return it to me with that which accompanies it from the lord chancellor to Sir Robert Walpole on my subject, that you may see the whole state of this affair, and make your proper and most prudent reflections with respect to your own interest, and take your measures accordingly."

"Hague, Sept. 4, 1739. I have been this day favoured with yours of the 20th and 21st*, and you will see by what I wrote to you already, that there is nothing I believe that can be imagined, to shew that you deserve, and his majesty's service requires, your coming hither, upon the foot you desire, that I have not represented to my brother; and I am fully persuaded that my brother has represented, with all his skill and credit, the same things to the king; and therefore I cannot agree with you (pray don't suspect my friendship, for indeed I don't

* See Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 540, 541.

deserve such a suspicion), that you should persevere in your hopes that *our royal master may, upon reflection and proper representations of the nature of things, and of his service at the Hague, be inclined to, &c.* The conclusion of which is in your mind, that Sir Robert Walpole has not convinced you of his having done his best for your service; which reflection, believe me, between you and me, and I can assure you it goes no farther, my brother does not deserve.

"Pray now, dear Trevor, what does lord Harrington say to you on this subject? Does he, who has often seen his majesty, and knows his temper, imagine there is the least probability or possibility of my brother's being able to compass this point? I protest I don't know the particular things which the king says, when he gives his refusal; but perhaps if we did know, it would * * * * † you and me more than the refusal itself. But, in short, that nothing may be concealed from you, I send you, and to you alone, the letter I have received on this disagreeable subject, this day, from my brother. That part which relates to myself, would have made any one, that is not so intimate as I am with you, have forborne making such a communication; but as I can assure you that I shall be governed by no concern for myself, because I

† Illegible, probably convince.

don't care how soon I retire, not only from hence, but from all business, so you will see that my brother's sincere thoughts are, that my pressing to come home, and his pressing the king to send you in my place, on the foot we all desire, will have no other effect than to provoke his majesty to call for the nomination of another minister for the Hague; and although our friends may be so partial to us, yet his majesty, I am afraid, will not, as to think that we are the only persons that can serve him at this place. The apprehension of a contingency, against which you apprehend your philosophy would be a proof, strikes and affects me very much, though it did not occur until you mentioned it; especially considering that a person, who is, I am afraid, more in his majesty's favour (for princes take fancies and humours for persons) than either you or I, will soon return from his employment, where he had 8*l.* a day. But I have troubled you and myself too long upon a most disagreeable subject. Let not, dear Trevor, your personal desires and disappointment alter your personal friendship and regard for those that have it not in their power to prevent this disappointment."

"Hague, Sept. 11, 1739. I have received your favour of the 28th*, returning me the pa-

* Memoirs, &c. vol. iii. p. 546.

pers I sent you, and I am glad to find you are fully convinced of my brother's cordiality and seriousness in endeavouring to procure for you what you desire, and so well deserve. I must own freely to you, that my suspicion of your not being perfectly easy in that respect, made me not venture, for fear of incurring something of the same nature, to write to you directly myself, my opinion as to what you should determine to do, upon the supposition that his majesty was absolutely determined not to allow you any more than 5*l.* per diem, and that the 3*l.* was absolutely desperate. For I know how unwilling every body is to believe any thing impracticable which they have at heart, and is reasonable too; and I don't doubt but when you state your case to all your friends and relations they will entirely approve the reasonableness of your demand, and that you should not accept the post there at less than 8*l.* per diem. But have you stated to them the impossibility of obtaining from his majesty any more at present than 5*l.* and the consequence of another being named in your room, and your being put out of your rank of business and preferment, and of his majesty being disobliged, and that your future hopes and expectations must depend upon some contingency at home, in consequence of your merit and the interest of your friends and relations?

all which are certainly very great, and I think you can yield to nobody in these respects.

"But don't be uneasy at what I am going to say. There are a great many others who have, or pretend to have merit, have great friends and relations, have served a considerable while in parliament, have solicited for vacancies, have been disappointed, have hopes and promises upon new vacancies, of such places as you would desire and accept, which are not near so numerous as there are competitors. Joined with these considerations, the humour and predilection of our master, when various pretenders are named for a place; I say, dear Trevor, I am afraid these things have not been stated by you to your friends and relations; nay, perhaps they have not occurred to you, and indeed they cannot occur to you in so strong a light as I see them; because you cannot have had that opportunity of seeing them in that light, although my brother has hinted something of that nature tenderly to you, and tenderly only for fear of disobliging, and being thought to give a preference to others.

"After having said all this, you may equally depend upon my friendship at home as well as abroad, though you must not depend upon the success of it. I am, after having said this, by no means averse to my brother's making another

trial with the king in your behalf; but I hope that trial will be soon, and in consequence your determination too; for I find we shall be at cross purposes. You defer making your option until my return home is fixt, I defer sending for the yacht until I hear you have made your option, and I think it is absolutely necessary, both for your sake as well as mine, that you should be here some time before I leave this place, if you intend to be here at all. I shall therefore write by this post that the yacht may be sent for me; for as the States of Holland will, I hope and believe, come to some resolution upon the ten men of war during this meeting, and that will, I am afraid be taken *ad referendum* by the provinces; or if Holland should put it off again, it will be so long before they resume it, that I don't see that there will be any occasion for my staying after the separation of the present assembly of Holland. * * *

"On reflection, I shall not write till next post for the yacht. Your friend Charles will go over with the mail, and if he will be free enough, he will tell you what your friends (I mean nobody but his brother and the *greffier*, for I have acquainted nobody else, besides Milling, with your difficult situation,) think you should do, if you are reduced to the extremity I apprehend. Remember, once upon a birth-day,

a great string of coaches following one another close to get to St. James's, a person in a very fine equipage and clothes went out of the rank, because he was afraid he should not get there so soon as he desired, and, according to his dress, deserved. But being once out of the rank, other coaches proceeded in his place, and he did not get to court until the drawing-room was over."

Mr. Walpole having at length persuaded Mr. Trevor to accept the post of envoy, and by unceasing importunities obtained his own recal; "You will see," writes lord Harrington to him, in a private and particular letter, dated September 11, 1739, "by my dispatch to you of this day, that the king has complied with your request of returning to England, whenever you shall think it may be done without prejudice to his majesty's service; and you will also find, in the same letter, that Mr. Trevor is appointed to succeed you, but as envoy extraordinary only. I can assure you, with the greatest sincerity, that every thing possible has been tried, both by his friends and yours, to procure for him, what you and he, and indeed I may say all of us, most heartily desired; but found it absolutely impossible. Nor had we much less difficulty to prevail upon Mr. Trevor to accept of all that was possible to obtain of the king for

him for the present. But as he has now submitted himself to the king's pleasure, I can't but hope that a little time will procure for him what he so much desires. Mr. Weston will have acquainted you that the project of an answer to the Spanish manifesto, which you sent hither, has been extremely approved; and that orders have been given for printing it in the manner you desired."

In consequence of this permission, Mr. Walpole took leave on the 13th of October 1739, and quitted the Hague with much joy to himself, but to the great regret of the States, which they expressed in their reply to the king's letters of recal, in a manner highly honourable to their own feelings and his character:

"We have so perfect a confidence in the probity of the said embassador extraordinary, whose person and ministry here have been most agreeable to us, that we willingly refer ourselves to the report he shall make to your majesty on this head. We regret his leaving us, because we looked upon it as an advantage to have such a minister residing with us, endowed with extraordinary talents, a vast capacity, and uncommon prudence, confirmed by long experience, of which he has given proofs in every thing that he has had to treat here, as well as of his noble zeal for your majesty's service, and his laudable

earnestness to cultivate and cement the happy union between your majesty and our republic, and the good understanding between the two nations; two points which are, and ever will be, the object of our wishes and desires."

CHAPTER 21.

1739—1740.

Mr. Walpole returns to England — Supports the Convention with Spain — Proposes an Alliance with Prussia — Origin and Progress of the Antipathy between the Houses of Brunswick and Brandenburgh — Death of Frederic William — Plan of a Grand Alliance.

ON his return to England, Mr. Walpole found the people in a state of ferment and agitation, wild with schemes of vengeance for the Spanish depredations, and sharing in imagination the treasures of Peru and Mexico *. He was not, however, hurried away by these dreams of vengeance and conquest; he had uniformly promoted the pacific system of his brother, and united with him in opposing the precipitate declaration of war.

"About this time," to use the words which conclude his Apology, "the depredations of the Spaniards on the British commerce in the

* In a confidential letter to Mr. Trevor, dated March 16, 1739, he thus describes the agitated state of the public mind: "I am afraid that the words of the address, with regard to searching, are already so strong, for the sake of popularity, as to make, between you and me, a war with Spain inevitable. But that is not the question; ambition, avarice, distress, disappointment, and all the complicated vices that tend to render the minds of men uneasy, are got out of Pandora's box, and fill all places and all hearts in the nation."

West Indies, encouraged by the turbulent spirit of the queen of Spain, and out of resentment for the great illegal trade, carried on, contrary to treaty, by the English, with the Spanish-American coast and ports, had given a handle to the disaffected and discontented party, (increased by the accession of those in parliament who belonged to the court of the late prince of Wales,) to raise a great ferment in the nation, to occasion warm debates in parliament, and strong resolutions and addresses to the crown, against such violent proceedings; with an advice to his majesty to try once more amicable measures to obtain reparations, and to prevent the like injuries for the future. In consequence of which, a convention was negotiated and concluded with Spain, by which that king acknowledged our grievances, agreed to pay in three months a certain sum in satisfaction, and to discuss and determine in five months, by plenipotentiaries on both sides, the respective complaints, in order to put a final end to all differences between the two nations. This convention, after a long and solemn debate, was approved by parliament; but most of the members of his majesty's council, excepting Sir Robert Walpole and his brother, were so alarmed, and betrayed such apprehensions of the popular discontent and cries, that their catholic majesties, being

informed of it by their minister in England, and convinced that these clamours would force his majesty and his ministry into war with them, refused to make the payment of the money stipulated for satisfaction, at the stated time; and consequently a rupture ensued between the two nations, in which France privately supported the Spaniards, while neither the emperor nor the States seemed disposed to take any part."

From this period Mr. Walpole remained in England; but held no ostensible place under government. He did not, however, intermit his political labours; but continued the same attention to public business, and supplied the cabinet with numerous papers, deductions, and memorials, relative to the conduct of foreign affairs, during that critical period which immediately preceded and followed the death of the emperor Charles the Sixth.

His sagacity led him to foresee that the war with Spain must occasion a rupture with France, and to appreciate the necessity of forming some plan of united measures to counteract the preponderance which that power had acquired on the continent. He had no reliance on the cooperation of the emperor, whose rash and impolitic schemes had reduced his country to a state

of weakness and degradation*. Charles had no sooner concluded a pacification with France, Spain, and Sardinia, than, in alliance with Russia, he attacked the Turks, with the sanguine hopes of procuring an indemnification on the side of Hungary for his losses in Italy. But the disasters of a single campaign compelled him to desert his ally, and purchase a dishonourable peace, under the dictates and mediation of France, by the cession of Servia and the important town of Belgrade. His finances were exhausted, and his armies reduced and dispirited.

Mr. Walpole well knew, from long experience, that the States would not take an active part in opposition to France, unless the barrier towns were put in a state of defence, and unless they were secure of being supported by an army, not depending on the uncertain contingents of the Austrian levies, but effective in the field. On considering the situation of the European powers, none appeared capable of promptly contributing this support, but the king of Prussia, who had an effective army of 80,000 men, and possessed a considerable treasure in reserve.

* In one of his letters to Mr. Trevor, he says, "We find they (the court of Vienna) begin to open their eyes; it is better they should do it themselves, than we should pretend to lift up their eye-lids for them; for we can't make them see if they have a mind to be blind; and if that be the case, things are well enough." January 25, 1738-9.

Both Mr. Walpole and his brother had long urged the policy of forming an alliance with Prussia; but their proposals met with insuperable difficulties, from the inveterate antipathy between the houses of Brunswick and Brandenburgh, which originated in the reigns of Frederick William and George the First.

Frederick William was nearly connected in blood and marriage with George the First; he was son of his sister Sophia Charlotte, and had espoused his daughter Dorothy. On the death of queen Anne, he offered to support the right of his father-in-law to the British throne with all his forces, and for many years continued to treat him with marks of high respect. They shared together the spoils of Sweden in 1716, and co-operated in many schemes of German politics; the bands of amity were drawn closer by the accession of Frederick William to the treaty of Hanover; and a double marriage was negotiated between the prince of Wales and a Prussian princess, and the prince-royal of Prussia, afterwards Frederick the Second, and one of the English princesses.

But this good understanding was interrupted by the capricious and brutal behaviour of Frederick William to his queen and children, and by his defection from the alliance of Hanover. Hence arose the suspension of the marriage

contracts, and the coolness between the two monarchs continued till the death of George the First.

George the Second brought to the throne, in addition to political reasons, a personal antipathy to his brother-in-law. Having been associates during their youth, their discordant tempers had inspired them with mutual contempt, and their aversion was heightened by a disagreement relative to the will of George the First. The British monarch, in allusion to the minute attention of Frederick William to his military arrangements, and his uncourtly manners, called him "My brother the corporal;" while Frederick, retaliating on the punctilious etiquette of George the Second, styled him "My cousin the dancing-master." The negotiation for the double marriage between the two sovereigns contributed to increase their irritability; and Frederick William frequently declared, in his paroxysms of passion, "that he had already too much of the Brunswick blood in his family, and should think himself culpable if he admitted more*." His anger was also roused by sus-

* For an account of the early life of Frederick the Second, and this singular attempt to escape from the tyranny of his father, see History of the House of Austria, vol. ii. p. 211. Polnitz, Histoire des quatre derniers Souverains de la Maison de Brandebourg, tom. ii. p. 208.

picions that the attempt of the prince-royal to escape from his dominions was made at the suggestion of the English court; but his fury was inflamed to the highest degree, by the treatment of his recruiting parties in Hanover, and the arrest of his agents for kidnapping men from England.

Agents from Frederick William having enticed several tall men to enlist in the Prussian service, their relations and friends made repeated complaints to government; and two of his German emissaries were arrested for attempting, by large offers, to enlist a corporal of the guards. Mr. Walpole transmitted to Mr. Guy Dickens, the British envoy at Berlin, the act of parliament by which the offence was made capital; desiring him to lay it before the Prussian ministers, and represent the necessity of discontinuing so illegal a practice. As baron Borck, the Prussian minister, was proved to be the principal manager and most active director of such enrolments, representations were made for his recal; but Frederick William, declaring that he would not be prescribed to by England, restored him to his mission: he threatened, that, should his envoy be contemptuously received, the English minister at Berlin should be treated in the same manner; and if Borck was desired to withdraw from England, he would

instantly order Guy Dickens to quit the Prussian dominions. He also gave him an additional pension of 1000 crowns, which, as the Prussian ministers insinuated, was granted because the English had complained against him. George the Second, incensed at these insults, sent orders from Hanover not to receive Borck as the Prussian envoy.

It was now apprehended that Frederick William would carry his threats into execution, by instantly dismissing the English envoy; and Mr. Guy Dickens entertained the same suspicions, on being unexpectedly summoned to a conference with the Prussian ministers of state. To his astonishment, however, no notice was taken of Borck; but two objects of complaint were brought forward: the first related to the arrest of the Prussian agents in England; and "the second point," to use the words of Mr. Guy Dickens, "was a personal quarrel to me, about a dog belonging to one of my neighbours, which some of my servants stole away, not long since, because he had been very troublesome to the whole family. This affair was treated in a very serious manner, and as if they had a mind to make me believe that the stealing away of a Prussian dog was a matter of much greater consequence than the stealing away several score of our master's subjects. But this most important

dispute was at last settled; the ministers promising me that my neighbour should be no more troublesome to me, and I agreeing to make him a few apologies for the too warm zeal my servants had shewn for my repose and their own. So that if I am to be served with a *concilium abeundi*, or any other out-of-the-way compliment, it will entirely turn upon the answer I shall receive from England, upon the affair of the Prussian agent *."

The dispute relating to Borck and the agent occasioned "a paper war," as Guy Dickens calls it, between lord Harrington and the Prussian ministers; and Frederick William became calm or warm as the situation of Europe rendered him of greater or less consequence.

This unfortunate misunderstanding, between two sovereigns of the same family, and of the same religion, had given great advantage to the French interest in Germany, and crippled the efforts of the house of Austria. Sir Robert Walpole was the only minister who had ventured to represent the policy of a reconciliation with the king of Prussia, and endeavoured to overcome the repugnance of George the Second. His efforts were ineffectual; but as the health of the Prussian monarch declined, he looked forward

* Mr. Guy Dickens to Mr. Tilson, Berlin, March 2, 1737.

to the accession of Frederick the Second, with hopes of effecting a reconciliation between the two houses. With this view Mr. Walpole, in the beginning of 1740, drew up some thoughts on the utility of an alliance with Prussia, occasioned by the approaching death of the king.

Frederick William died on the 31st of May 1740, and was succeeded by his son Frederick the Second. This illustrious prince was in the 28th year of his age when he ascended the throne, and aspired to rival Cæsar both with the pen and the sword. An army of 80,000 the best disciplined troops in Europe, and a considerable treasure, rendered him the arbiter of Germany, and placed in his hand the power of pacifying or convulsing nations. He was instantly and assiduously courted by the principal states of Europe; Berlin became the centre of multifarious negotiations, and the wily monarch complacently listened to the respective overtures, without adopting a decisive line of conduct. He temporised with more prudence and discretion than was expected from a young and spirited sovereign; until a scene of action should present itself worthy of employing those talents for the cabinet and the field, with which nature had endowed him, and which education and reflection had matured.

A favourable opportunity now occurred to the

British cabinet for renewing the antient and natural connection between sovereigns so nearly related by blood, which might be rendered highly advantageous to both parties. Accordingly, soon after the arrival of George the Second at Hanover, a negotiation for a new defensive alliance between England and Prussia was opened, with reciprocal professions and promises, which seemed to ensure success. But, in the course of this negotiation, the exorbitant claims of Prussia on one side, and the petty interests of Hanover on the other, obstructed its progress, and delayed the conclusion. Neither party was actuated by serious intentions, and both were desirous rather to impose upon each other, than to form a solid and well-grounded alliance. On both sides extreme jealousy prevailed, and both were anxious to discover the inclinations of each other, before they explained their own. No precise stipulations were brought forwards; only general insinuations made; and those particular interests which each sovereign had at heart were studiously concealed from view. The minister was merely consulted for the sake of form; and the whole business was conducted by the king, or by lord Harrington under his direction. We insert a confidential letter from Mr. Walpole to his brother, which displays his political foresight, his accurate knowledge of

the real situation and interests of England and Europe, and the important advantages which might at this time have been derived from a close connection with Prussia. It presents at the same time a curious picture of the British cabinet, and the difficulties which Sir Robert Walpole encountered from the private sentiments of the king, and the discordant principles of his colleagues.

"Wolterton, Aug. 18, 1740.—I have received yours of the 14th giving me an account of what has passed at Hanover relating to the negotiation with Prussia: and I must own that the manner which this last court seems to pursue in transacting business, resembles but too much the little low cunning constantly practised by his late Prussian majesty, which was to have at the same time negotiations on foot with different and opposite powers, and to endeavour, without opening his own thoughts and desires, to discover the disposition of others relating to his own particular views, and to make use of that discovery on one side, as a shoeing horn, to get a better bargain for himself on the other. The consequence of which was, that it was difficult to make any treaty at all with him, and none was ever made that lasted long; and as I have perceived no alteration in the ministry, since this king of Prussia came to the throne, I

am apprehensive that the same selfish principles and uncertain measures prevail, and the same little genius, although seated in a mind not so violent and cruel.

"However, the union with Prussia is of such consequence to the liberties of Europe, and to the particular interest of his majesty, both as king and elector, considering the present situation of affairs and disposition of powers in Europe, and especially in the North, that supposing the king of Prussia to be (though no great prince) of a more steady and amicable temper than his father was, nothing should be left that is reasonable and just, untried to gain him, provided it be managed in a manner not to betray any weakness on our side.

"The first great and essential point, and without which every thing else is vain, is to know whether there is on both sides an equal good disposition to enter into a strict union for mutual security and advantage.

"I suppose as far as general words and professions can go, that appears evident enough; and in consequence of that evidence, a defensive alliance ought to be the foundation of that union.

"But a bare defensive alliance in the present state of things, will not answer the ends and intentions of either party without some additional

secret articles, adapted to what is now, or may be soon, the situation of Europe.

"His majesty is actually engaged in a war with Spain, in support of his just rights and possessions; the king of Prussia apprehends that he may be soon involved in a war with the palatine family, to vindicate his pretensions to Berg and Juliers. As it cannot be desired or expected that his Prussian majesty should in consequence of a defensive alliance immediately declare war against Spain, so he cannot desire and expect that the king should, on account of his Prussian majesty's pretensions upon those duchies, enter into a war with the palatine family. But as we may justly insist upon the king of Prussia's taking part with us in case any other power should attack his majesty, on account of the war with Spain as well as on any other account, so it may be reasonable for us to agree to assist his Prussian majesty in case any other power should attack him on account of any steps he shall take against the palatine family, for obtaining satisfaction with regard to Berg and Juliers, as well as on any other account. And here seems to be a reciprocal and similar interest and obligation proper for secret articles explanatory of the defensive alliance, and indeed a general defensive alliance unaccompanied with an explanation of these two

cases, would, as the Prussian minister has hinted, at this juncture be of no consequence or use at all.

"And supposing both sides sincere at bottom for a good understanding, the difficulty at present seems to turn only upon the nicety of which side should open and explain themselves first, which may by degrees (without being at first intended) unless care be taken, create such a jealousy and punctilio as to break the negotiation entirely off.

"And therefore as each side may soon have an occasion for the assistance of the other in the present critical juncture, the method of proceeding should be not to exact from each other in writing a specific demand of desires and expectations, but in a conference between minister and minister to let them appear by degrees. From thence things may be stated in writing, and an account rendered to their masters respectively of all that passed; and any difficulties may be cleared up in another conference, in order to reconcile them, and to make the mutual engagements parallel with respect to the particular cases existing, or likely to exist soon; and part of the general defensive alliance.'

"Lord Harrington (for example) might without difficulty let the Prussian minister see, that in consequence of this defensive alliance his majesty must expect the king of Prussia's assistance

in case any other power should attack the king on account of the war with Spain. The Prussian minister having already mentioned the affair of Berg and Juliers, cannot in a conference decline letting his lordship see what his master desires and expects from the king relating to that point, and in consequence of such an opening by conference the desires of both may be brought upon an equal foot, and accordingly stipulated in secret articles, to make such and such points a *casus fœderis* of the defensive alliance, and by this means the sincerity of the Prussian court may be discovered, without hazarding on either side an ill use being made of pro memorias delivered in writing, which each side seems jealous of.

" The lords of confidence have certainly done extremely right in desiring to know what particulars could be asked and expected before they could possibly give their opinion about them; and lord Harrington should not hazard any thing in writing about Berg and Juliers, unless the Prussian minister will explain his master's desires on that head. But why his lordship should not endeavour to bring out the desires and demands on both sides by an amicable conference, I cannot tell, unless our master himself is unwilling to have any thing done in that affair without some other particular consideration,

besides the assistance of Prussia in the troubles that threaten Europe. But sure I am if the negotiation goes on in this general way of banding the ball from minister to minister at Hanover, and from Hanover to England, without learning in a confidential manner the sentiments of both kings on the points they have each at heart, this negotiation will be all amusement, and that amusement will produce jealousy, and jealousy a coolness, which will end in the usual family aversion and constant opposition in their respective interests both as kings and electors; for all which the emperor according to his perverse politics will not be sorry, and of which the French will not fail to make a solid advantage, and will find means to gain the Prussian court, which means are not difficult to foresee, and I shall take notice of them by and by.

"I have hitherto confined myself to Berg and Juliers, as being a point in which the king and the king of Prussia have no dispute with one another; but unless the affairs of Mecklenburgh (which I forgot to mention in my paper at Houghton), where their interests and pretensions clash extremely, as well as that of Ostfrise, be adjusted in the treaty to be made, at least so far as to prevent all forcible means in support of their respective rights, whatever treaty is made will hardly be cordial or of long duration.

" And here I cannot forbear observing that although the Prussian minister mentioned at first Mecklenburgh and Ostfrise as well as Berg and Juliers, he has omitted the first points in his reply to lord Harrington; and demands to know what the king would do for him towards the conquest of Berg and Juliers. That omission joined with so strong a request, makes me apprehend, that if the king's answer be not satisfactory, his Prussian majesty will renew his negotiation with France, and finding that he cannot get the cardinal to go further than the treaty at the Hague, he will be content with that, if his eminence will engage to guaranty or support in a proper manner his succession to Ostfrise and his pretensions to Mecklenburgh by good offices at the imperial court. And if the emperor finds that there is a coolness between his majesty and the king of Prussia, he may be induced to oblige that prince at the king's expence, especially if he still continues under the awful influence of the French court.

" But I have troubled you longer than I intended and indeed than is necessary, because I think it not prudent for you to venture any notions of your own or mine, as such, in a letter to lord Harrington; for I am persuaded he will not make a good use of them, and therefore you will pardon this tedious epistle."

Notwithstanding, however, these unfavourable appearances, and the impolitic behaviour of George the Second, Mr. Walpole did not relinquish all hopes of success. He even formed a plan of a confederacy, to unite Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Saxony with England and Holland, in one grand defensive league, as a counterbalance to the power and efforts of the house of Bourbon, should France, as he expected, come forward to the assistance of Spain. The plan being submitted to Sir Robert Walpole and the duke of Newcastle, was highly approved by both *; but Mr. Walpole himself was too sensible of the prejudices fostered against Prussia, to entertain sanguine hopes of success.

"There is such a contrast," he writes to Mr. Trevor, "in our way of thinking and talking, and a mixture in some of dulness and cunning, that I don't expect much light from this chaos. Lord Harrington, as I am told, (for we have not seen one another,) says that a negotiation with Prussia is not desperate. His majesty, by a short conversation I have had with him, is far from thinking any such thing: and I believe his lordship does not press him upon it, but would have others do it in order to get anger without

* The duke of Newcastle to Mr. Walpole, Oct. 9, 1744.

any success, while his lordship is all complaisance, and says nothing to incur displeasure. On the other side the king was pleased to tell me, that you and lord Harrington had found the States very well disposed to assist him. I did take the liberty to let his majesty know that I heard they had declared the same thing to you as they had last year to me; which was, that in case his majesty was attacked here, they would and must go to his assistance. But I could not forbear adding, that unless they immediately set about an augmentation of forces, either by foreign troops or raising new regiments, should France at the same time as she ventured to attack Great Britain, march a body of 50,000 men towards Flanders, I could not see how the States could put that good-will in execution. I could perceive that his majesty's present plan is to go directly to the emperor, and to press him to put the empire in a condition to act. Whatever we should offer to his imperial majesty for this purpose, without having formed an alliance with other powers, I am afraid he dares not accept; and the money, if taken, would be squandered away. I have, indeed, drawn out my notions* too long to be sent you by post, and not worth the carriage. Two or three persons have seen them, and particularly our friend

* He alludes to his project of a grand alliance.

Mr. Poyntz and I have canvassed them over; but we both think them so disagreeable to the present temper here, with respect to Prussia, that they will never be relished, and consequently will never be pressed by him whose business and office it is to do it; and, therefore, I shall lock my thoughts up, and keep by degrees as much as I can out of the scene of foreign affairs.

"I am fully convinced that the king of Prussia is against the formidable power of France; nay, I know that in his correspondence with ladies of wit here, he has said that he loved the French people, but that he hated the power of the crown, and must oppose it, although he was sorry for it. But I am as fully convinced that we do not think here of getting him. I believe I described to you the same person as you mention to be sent to Berlin, and I named him here long before; but the duke of Newcastle does not care he should be engaged so far in business, and Sir Robert Walpole does not care to have him absent from the house of lords. But he that governs all, will not be disposed to make his relation so great a compliment at present: perhaps necessity, and finding all things standing still, may at last make an impression. I have suggested another plan, which is, that the Russian court having declared that

they cannot make an alliance with us, but in conjunction with other powers, (meaning particularly Prussia,) and having hinted that they intend to give us a counter project, in which they propose to include Prussia and Denmark, I would stay for that counter project, to make it the foundation of a grand alliance*."

Meanwhile, however, the court of Petersburgh was sounded; and the empress Anne, the implacable enemy of France, appeared inclined to co-operate. At the same time secret application was made to the court of Vienna, and the emperor, who was provoked with the duplicity, and alarmed at the aspiring views of France, was anxious to renew his antient connection with the maritime powers. In conformity with this plan, instructions were forwarded to Mr. Robinson at Vienna, and directions framed for the respective ministers abroad; when the deaths of Charles the Sixth and of the Czarina deranged the measures of the cabinet, and gave a new aspect to the system of European politics.

* Cockpit, Oct. 21, 1741.

END OF VOL. I.

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